

يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ وَيَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ بَدَّلُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ كُفْرًا وَأَحَلُّوا قَوْمَهُمْ دَارَ الْبَوَارِ

*“Allah will establish in strength those who believe,
with the Word that stands firm, in this world and the Hereafter;
But Allah will leave, to stray, those who do wrong;
Allah does what He will.*

*Have you not turned your vision to those who have
changed the favour of Allah into blasphemy, and caused
their people to descend to the House of Perdition?”*

SURAH 14 IBRAHIM VERSE 27 AND 28.



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Maqam Imam al-Haddad
Tarīm - Ḥaḍramawt - Yemen

THE PERFECT SUMMONS AND GENERAL ADMONITION

Imam ‘Abdullah bin ‘Alawi al-Haddad

الدَّعْوَةُ النَّامَةُ وَالذِّكْرَةُ الْعَامَّةُ

THE PERFECT SUMMONS AND GENERAL ADMONITION

Imam al-Haddad

al-Hadhrami, al-Shafii, al-Hussaini
May Allah, the Exalted Have Mercy Upon Him



لِمَقَامِ الْإِمَامِ الْحَدَّادِ

تَرْيَمُ
الْحَاوِي
ت: ١٥٩٤٤
بِرَبِّي وَبِرَبِّي لَا يَنْفَعُنِي إِلَّا الْعَمَلُ وَشُكْرُكَ

AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION

الدَّعْوَةُ التَّامَّةُ وَالتَّذْكِرَةُ الْعَامَّةُ

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لِلْإِمَامِ شَيْخِ الْإِسْلَامِ قُطْبِ الدَّعْوَةِ وَالْإِرْشَادِ
الْحَبِيبِ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَلَوِي الْحَدَّادِ
الْحَضْرَمِيِّ الشَّافِعِيِّ الْحُسَيْنِيِّ
رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى

Front Cover showing the restored front door entrance to
Imam al-Haddad House in Hawi Tarim Hadhramaut Yemen

The Perfect Summons And A General Admonition

By the Imam, al-Sheikh of Islam,
the Pivot of Dakwah, the Guiding Light
the Beloved Abdullah bin Alwi al-Haddad
al-Hadhrami, al-Shafii, al-Hussaini
May Allah, the Exalted have mercy upon him

An English Translation
by
Muhammad Mmamali Adam

Imam Al-Haddad's manuscripts were recompiled into books by Habib Ali bin Isa bin Abdulkader Al-Haddad. Subsequently, they were re-edited, reprinted, translated and distributed by various inspired parties.

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Maqam Imam al-Haddad
Hawi - Hadhramaut - Yemen

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A Short Biography of Imam Al-Haddad



In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

He is Al-Imam Al-Habib Abdullah bin Alawi Bin Muhammad Al-Haddad, the famous Imam, the *Shaykh* of Islam, the foremost of the people unification, the noble descendant of the Prophet, Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, a descendant of Al-Imam Hussein, may Allah be pleased with him, the *Shaykh* Abdullah ibn Alawi Al-Haddad Al-Alawi, may Allah reward him for us with the best rewards He gives those of His people who guide us to Him.

He was born in Subair, a small suburb in Tarim, Hadhramaut, South Yemen, on the night 5 Safar 1044 after Hijrah. Tarim was already a centre of the learned *Asyraf* of the descendant of *Saiyidina* Hussein bin Ali bin Abu Talib. He grew up in an enlightened environment. He was raised and educated there, initially taught by his father, and was never seen to show the recklessness of other children. He lost his eyesight while still young and was granted the power of discernment as compensation. He gathered as he grew, the best of knowledge and spirituality, and became outstanding in knowledge, guidance, calling people to Allah, and being a shaykh in the perfect sense of the word. He was given the title Pole of Guidance [*Qutbul Irshad*] by the greatest of the people of knowledge in his time and after that until today.

Some have said that there were three ranks in calling to Allah, according to whether it was done by pen, tongue or foot (travelling). All three were combined to perfection in the works of Imam Al-Haddad, may Allah shower His mercy upon him. His books are still in print in Egypt, India, Hijaz, Istanbul, and Java. His fame spread throughout the Muslim world, and his writings which were based on the Quran and the practices of the Prophet [*Sunnah*] were never criticised nor thought to be controversial.

His roots from the Prophet Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace upon him, from Fatima Az-Zahraa, daughter of Muhammad and Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib, Gate to (The Radiant) the City of Knowledge, may Allah be pleased with him and all his descendants.

Then on from Al-Imam Hussein > Imam Ali Zainal Abidin > Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir > Imam Jaafar As-Saadiq > Imam Ali Al-Uraidhi > Imam Muhammad An-Naqib > Isa Ar-Rumi > Ahmad Al-Muhajir illa Allah > Ubaidillah > Alawi > Muhammad > Alawi > Ali Khali' Qassam > Muhammad of Mirbat > Alawi > Abdur Rahman > Ahmad Al-Faqih > Abdullah > Muhammad > Ahmad > Abu Bakr At-Tawil > Ahmad Al-Haddad > Alawi > Muhammad > Abdullah > Ahmad > Muhammad > Alawi > Abdullah Qutbul Irshad

He earnestly sought knowledge, accompanying such scholars as:

1. al-Habib Umar bin Abdul Rahman Al-Attas
2. al-Habib Oukail bin Abdurrahman As-Saqqaf
3. al-Habib Abdurrahman bin Syaikh Aideed
4. al-Habib Sahl Bin Ahmed Bahasan Al-Hadeely Baalwi
5. as-Saeed Muhammad Bin Alwi As-Saqqaf

Amongst his students are:

1. His son, our leader al-Habib Hassan bin Abdullah Al-Haddad.
2. al-Habib Ahmad bin Zain Al-Habshee
3. al-Habib Abdurrahman bin Abdullah Bilfaqeh
4. al-Habib Muhammad bin Zain bin Semait
al-Habib Umar bin Zain bin Semait
5. al-Habib Umar bin Abdurrahman Al-Bar
6. al-Habib Ali bin Abdullah bin Abdurrahman As-Saqqaf
7. al-Habib Muhammad bin Umar bin Taha As-Safi As-Saqqaf and many others.

It seems as if he was selected to carry out the mission of *dakwah* for Islam and spiritual guidance using wit and wisdom. People eventually entirely attended to him, and his name has become popular.

People from different fields of life benefited from his books, preaching and guidance. His mission received people's approval and love. His publications have been translated into English, Malay, French and other languages. He passed away on the evening of Tuesday, 7 *Dzulqaedah* 1132 Hijrah and was buried in a simple grave at the graveyard of Zanbal in Tarim. May Allah show mercy on him and reward him abundantly.

His publications are distinctively popular among the old and young then and till now. They include the following:

١. النَّصَائِحُ الدِّينِيَّةُ وَالْوَصَايَا الْإِيمَانِيَّةُ.

An Nasaih id-Diniyya wal Wasaya al-Imaniyyah.

1. Sincere Religious Advice and Recommendations of the Iman.

٢. الدَّعْوَةُ التَّامَّةُ وَالتَّذَكُّرُ الْعَامَّةُ.

Ad-Da'watut-Taammah wat-Tadhkiratul 'Aammah.

2. Perfect Summons and General Admonition.

٣. رِسَالَةُ الْمُعَاوَنَةِ وَالْمُظَاهَرَةِ وَالْمُؤَاوَزَةِ لِلرَّاغِبِينَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي سُلُوكِ طَرِيقِ الْآخِرَةِ.

Risalatul Mu'awanah wal Muzhaharah wal Mu'azarah Lir-Raagibeen Minal Mu'mineen Fee Suluki Tariq-al-Akhirah.

3. The Book of Assistance, Support and Encouragement for Such Believers as Desire to Follow the Way of the Afterlife.

٤. الْفُصُولُ الْعِلْمِيَّةُ وَالْأُصُولُ الْحِكْمِيَّةُ.

Al-Fusul ul-Ilmiyyah wal Usul ul-Hikamiyyah.

4. Knowledge and the Principles of Wisdom.

٥. سَبِيلُ الْإِذْكَارِ وَالْإِعْتِبَارِ بِمَا يَمُرُّ بِالْإِنْسَانِ وَيَنْفَضِي لَهُ مِنَ الْأَعْمَارِ.

*Sabilul-Iddhikaar wal-I'tibaar Bima Yamurru bil-Insan
Wa Yanqadhee Lahu Minal A'maar.*

5. The Way to Remember and Learn from the Lives of Man that Wane and Perish.

٦. رِسَالَةُ الْمُذَاكَرَةِ مَعَ الْإِخْوَانِ الْمُحِبِّينَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْخَيْرِ وَالْدِّينِ.

*Risalatul Muzhaakarah Ma'al-Ikhwaanil-Muhibbeen Min
Ahlil Khayr Waddeen.*

6. A Discussion Among Brothers and the Loved Ones From Among the Righteous in Good Deeds and Faith.

٧. رِسَالَةُ آدَابِ سُلُوكِ الْمُرِيدِ. *Rislatu Aadaabi Suluk il-Murid.*

7. The Book of Discipline in the Path of the Seeker.

٨. كِتَابُ الْحِكْمِ. *Kitaabul Hikam.*

8. Book of Wisdom.

٩. النَّفَائِسُ الْعَلَوِيَّةُ فِي الْمَسَائِلِ الصُّوفِيَّةِ.

An-Nafaais-il Alawiyyah fil Masaail-as-Sufiyyah.

9. The Gems of the *Alawiyya* Concerning Sufism.

١٠. إِثْحَافُ السَّائِلِ بِجَوَابِ الْمَسَائِلِ.

Ithaaf is-Saail bi-Jawabil Masaail.

10. The Gifts for the Seeker Being Some Answered Questions.

١١. الْوَصَايَا النَّافِعَةُ. *Al Wasaya an-nafti 'ah.*

11. Beneficial Religious Counsels.

١٢. وَسِيْلَةُ الْعِبَادِ إِلَى زَادِ الْمَعَادِ.

Waseelatul 'Ibaad Ilaa Zaadil Ma'aad.

12. A Means for People to Provide for the Hereafter. (A Compilation of the Imam *Azkaar* and *Awraad*, including *Wird Latif*, *Wird Kabir*, *Ratib al-Shahir*, *Hizbul-Fath* and *Hizbun-Nasr* by Habib Muhammad bin Alawi Al-Haddad).

١٣. الدُّرُّ الْمَنْظُومُ لِذَوِي الْعُقُولِ وَالْفُهُومِ.

Ad-Durrul Mandhum Li zawil 'Uqul Wal Fuhum.

13. Poetic Pearls for Discerning and Understanding Minds.
This is his *Diwan*, the best of his *Qaseedas*.

١٤. تَثْبِيْتُ الْقُوَادِ - بِذِكْرِ كَالِمِ مَجَالِسِ.

Tathbitul fu'ad bizikir kalam majilis.

14. Affirming of the Hearts - with Remembrance of the Speeches at Majlis Volume I and Volume II.

١٥. مُكَاتِبَاتُ الْإِمَامِ الْحَدَّادِ.

Mukatibat Al-Imam Al-Haddad.

15. Correspondences of Imam Al-Haddad.

Most of Imam Al-Haddad's manuscripts were recompiled by Habib Ali bin Isa bin Abdulkader Al-Haddad, who was born in Singapore and educated in Tarim. They were subsequently re-edited, reprinted, translated and distributed by various inspired parties.

Scholars, as well as the laymen, so highly admired the works that they would read them repeatedly. These scholarly works have also been described as a summary of the quintessence of Scholar Ghazali's literature and eventually indispensable as being brief, but comprehensive.

Author's Preface

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ.

“In the name of Allah, the Infinitely Merciful, the Compassionate.”

وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ الذِّكْرَ تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ.

“But teach (your message): for teaching benefits the Believers.”¹

وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ.

“There is neither might nor power except with the permission of Allah, the Most-High and Magnificent.”

سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ.

“Glory belongs to You, there shall be no knowledge for us, except what You has taught us. For truly You are the One who is perfect in knowledge and wisdom.”²

All praise and thanks belong to Allah, the Lord of Majesty and Bounty, the Sovereign, the Most Holy One, the Source of Peace, the Provider of Security, the Protector and Guardian, the Source of All Knowledge. He has graced us with a bounty for having guided us to believe in Him and embraces Islam. He appointed us as the best of peoples that evolved from humankind and creatures. He expounded to us in His Glorious All-manifesting Book through the tongue of His honest and true messenger the laws of religion, explained to us what is lawful, [halal] and what is unlawful, [haram]. He makes us distinguished what is right and wrong, guidance and error, acts of obedience and acts of wrong-doing. That became the evident proof for the rightly guided wayfarers, and the argument became established against those who disobey and exceed all bounds.

From Him, the Transcendent, the Exalted, we receive ample favours and an overwhelming argument against all beings in this universe, whether specific or general. He created beings for what He

¹ Surah 51 Az Zariyat Verse 55.

² Surah 2 Baqara Verse 32.

wills, and directs them as he pleases as a manifestation of mercy and bounty, wisdom and justice.

In that regard, He made them all sorts, in various state, conditions, and actions in life. He made them of various shapes and placed them into different divisions that thereby His great dumb-founding Power becomes clear alongside His All-encompassing Knowledge and overwhelming will and His universal Affairs, both seen and unseen. In none of this is He harmful nor is He unjust to His servants. He cannot be questioned for His acts, but they will be questioned for theirs.

He created Paradise and determined its dwellers, and they will dedicate their actions as per the deeds of the people of Paradise. And He created Hell-fire and determined its dwellers, and they will commit their activities as per the acts of the people of Hell-fire. In all these, they create nothing but are themselves created. They have neither control of hurt nor benefit to themselves, nor of death or life or being raised after death. Even so, they will not be pardon when they fail to discharge Allah's obligation upon them, like failing to abide by His covenant, obey His laws, and even doing things which He forbids so long as they are not doing so under duress, overwhelming power or compulsion. Indeed, they have perished those who are extravagant, those who exceed the bounds and those who allow themselves liberties who argue against their Lord. Allah, the Exalted Speaker, says about them¹

إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ.

“They follow nothing but fancy, and they do nothing but lie.”

To the Exalted belong the Strength and Power, the Bounty and Beneficence, the Favour and the Grace.

May Allah bless our master and leader Muhammad, His servant and messenger, whom He has sent as a mercy to all in the universe. With him, Allah sealed the message of Prophets and him he appointed as the lord of all messengers, and the most noble of them all those who came before and after him. He is the first of intercessor with an accepted intercession.

¹ Surah 6 an-An'am Verse 116 and repeated in Surah 10 Yunus Verse 66.

May such blessings of Allah be on the noble and respectable members of his house, and also upon his companions, learned imams, and upon their beneficent followers.

May such blessings continue until the day of arising and judgements, the day of return to Allah, of account and the weighing of deeds, and of crossing the Bridge upon which some feet will hold firm, and some will slip and falter.

يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ وَيَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ. أَلَمْ تَرَى إِلَى الَّذِينَ بَدَّلُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ كُفْرًا وَأَحَلُّوا قَوْمَهُمْ دَارَ الْبَوَارِ.

“Allah will establish in strength those who believe, with the Word that stands firm, in this world and the Hereafter; but Allah will leave, to stray, those who do wrong: Allah does what He will. Have you not turned your vision to those who have changed the favour of Allah into blasphemy and caused their people to descend to the House of Perdition?”¹

And that was the cause of the wrath and retribution.

وَأَدْخَلَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ تَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَامٌ.

“But those who believe and work righteousness will be admitted to Gardens beneath which rivers flow, to dwell therein for aye with the leave of their Lord. Their greeting therein will be: ‘Peace!’ ”²

O Lord, to You we seek refuge and protection, help and defence. We seek refuge from You against the wickedness of our souls and the evilness of our deeds, and against the mischief of every rebellious, evil spirit, and every hostile tyrant, and every one bearing malice and envy, and against the evil that crowd upon the earth, and that which comes out of it, and that which comes forth from heaven and what mounts up to it. Verily, You are All-Compassionate, the Forgiving. You are the Lord who protects all but is in no need of protection, and there is no escape from You except salvation to You. O Allah guide us with your guidance and appoint us among those who hasten forth to fulfil Your good pleasure,

¹ Surah 14 Ibrahim Verse 27 and 28.

² Surah 14 Ibrahim Verse 23.

and do not entrust us to any protector other Yourself. We beg you not to render us among those who go against Your commands and disobey You.

Sufficient is Allah to us. Most Excellent is He Whom we trust. There is no strength save from the Allah, the Most-High and the Sublime.

وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ.

“And my success (in my task) can only come from Allah. In Him, I trust, and unto Him, I look.”¹

وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ نَصِيرًا.

“Allah is enough for a protector and Allah is enough for a Helper.”²

“Allah is the best to protect and the best to help.”³ نِعْمَ الْمَوْلَى وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ.

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ.

“There is no god except Him, the Living, the Self-Subsisting.”⁴

He is alone in time immemorial that is without beginning and Unique in His Abiding Eternity that is without end.

After what has just been said, may this be a blessed work, by the will of Allah. We have put it together with the help of Allah. We have recorded in here some counsels and advice, ethics [*adab*] of knowledge [*il'm*] and deeds [*amal*] which one must study and note its meanings for which one has to know and to put into practice. Here we refer to counsel, advise and discipline directed firstly to ourselves and then our brothers in religion amongst the Believers and Muslims.

May Allah in His Grace, enable them and us to do what pleases Him. And may He appoint them and us among those who fear Him and are mindful the duties to Him as He should be feared, those who are grateful to Him and who invoke Him abundantly and glorify His name in the morning and evening.

¹ Surah 11 Hud Verse 88.

² Surah 4 An Nisa Verse 45.

³ Surah 8 Anfal Verse 40.

⁴ Surah 2 Baqara Verse 255.

Actions are but judged by intentions, and to each man will be credited that which he intended. A man is judged by the goal which he sets and not by where his body (or position) is, says He, the Exalted,
 كُلُّ يَعْمَلُ عَلَى شَاكِلَتِهِ فَرُبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ هُوَ أَهْدَى سَبِيلًا.

“Everyone acts according to his disposition: but your Lord knows best who it is that is best guided on the Way.”¹

Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, says,
 وَرُبُّكَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ. وَهُوَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لَهُ الْحَمْدُ فِي الْأُولَى
 وَالْآخِرَةِ وَلَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ.

And your Lord knows all that their hearts conceal and all that they reveal. And He is Allah: there is no god but He. To Him be praise, at first, and the last: for Him is the Command, and to Him shall you (all) be brought back.”²

The Prophet, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said,
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَى صُورِكُمْ وَأَجْسَادِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يَنْظُرُ إِلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ.
 “Verily, Allah does not look at your faces, bodies and your wealth, but He looks at your hearts and actions.”³

And he, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said,
 مَنْ عَزَا وَهُوَ لَا يَنْوِي إِلَّا عَقْلًا مَا نَوَى.
 “He who fights but intends nothing save the camel’s tethering rope shall get what he intends.”⁴

Among others, he, upon whom be blessings and peace, said
 أَكْثَرُ شَهِدَاءِ أُمَّتِي أَصْحَابِ الْفُرَشِ، وَرُبَّ قَتِيلٍ بَيْنَ الصَّفَيْنِ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِنَيْتِهِ.
 “Most martyrs of my people [ummah] are those die on their beds, and there may well be many death in between the ranks (of the holy war) whose intention only Allah know best.”

¹ Surah 17 Isra’ Verse 84.

² Surah 28 al-Qasas Verse 69 and 70.

³ Narrated by Muslim and ibn Manjah.

⁴ Narrated by Ahmad.

The Prophet, upon whom be blessings and peace, also said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَيُؤَيِّدُ هَذَا الدِّينَ بِالرَّجُلِ الْفَاجِرِ، وَبِأَفْوَامٍ لَا خَلَاقَ لَهُمْ.

“Verily Allah will aid this religion with the help of an immoral man and groups of people with no share of the hereafter.”¹

O Lord, grant that what You have taught us as an argument in our favour and a path leading towards Your pleasure and paradise. And let it not be an argument against us nor a path leading to your displeasure or hell-fire, which is the abode of Your punishment.

O Lord, make us benefit from what You teach us and bestow upon us such knowledge as will help us. All praises and thanks be to Allah at all times. We seek refuge with Allah from all states of the dwellers of hellfire.

We named this work “The Perfect Summons and a General Admonition” [*ad-Da’wah At-Tammah Wa-Tadzkirah Al-Amamah*]. We have arranged it in such a way that it has an Introduction or Prologue [*Muqaddimah*], the Eight Categories and an Epilogue.

The Introduction contains a commentary on a call to Allah, to His religion and His path. The Eight Categories are:

- Category One The learned [*‘ulama*].
- Category Two The Ascetics [*zuhud*] and Devotees.
- Category Three The People in Authority and Power
- Category Four The Businessmen and Manufacturers etc.
- Category Five The Poor and Weak.
- Category Six The Followers including Children, Women and Slaves.
- Category Seven Those who obey and disobey Allah among the common people.

¹ Narrated by Thabarani.

- **Category Eight** The people who do not submit to Allah's call, His Messenger, do not believe in Allah nor in the Last Day.

The Epilogue provides a brief counsel, some advice, sermons and words which soften the heart [*raqaiq*] directed and delivered to these eight categories of people. The epilogue thus brings the book to its conclusion.

Verily Allah is the Guide to the truth and righteousness. And to Him, we supplicate for assistance [*al-'awn*] and support [*at-Ta'ayid*]. And from Him, we ask for the enabling grace [*at-Tawfiq*] as well as a disposition to that which is right [*at-Tasdid*].

Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, says:

هُوَ رَبِّي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ مَتَابِ.

“He is my Lord. There is no deity save Him. In Him, I have placed my trust and unto Him is my recourse.”¹

And here begin the work we have set out to do, and by Allah, we seek help, and upon Him depends the realisation of the quest. There is no god except Him neither is there any Lord except Him. None other is worshipped and served except Him. His is the Lord of Grace and Bounty, the Favour at the beginning and at the end, within and without.

Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, says:

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ.

“He is the First (without beginning) and the Last (without end), the Evident (Who is never absent nor hidden) and the Immanent (Who has no limit, is beyond counting and comprehension) and He has full knowledge of all things.”²



¹ Surah 13 arRa'd Verse 30.

² Surah 57 al-Hadid Verse 3.

Introduction

[*Muqaddimah*]

We will discuss here the subject of calling people unto Allah, His religion and path that is Allah's command concerning this task, the excellence of such a vocation and the stress laid upon it. The prologue refers to this issue and contains a lot of benefits.

Allah, the Lofty and Most Noble, the Most Strong and Most Firm, in His sacred and manifest book says to His true and honest Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him:

أُدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بَالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ.

“Invite (all) to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for your Lord knows best, who have strayed from His Path, and who receive guidance.”¹

The Exalted says,

قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ.
“Say you: “This is my Way: I do invite unto Allah - on evidence clear as the seeing with one's eyes - I and whoever follows me. Glory to Allah! And never will I join gods with Allah!”²

The Exalted says,

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ.

¹ Surah 16 An-Nahl Verse 125

² Surah 12 Yusuf Verse 108

“Who is better in speech than one who calls (men) to Allah, works righteousness, and says, “I am of those who bow in Islam?”¹

The Exalted says,

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ.

“Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: they are the ones to attain felicity.”²

Duty of the Prophets and Messengers

Now, the invitation to Allah, His Path, His religion and obedience is the attribute of the prophets and messengers. Allah has commanded them to fulfil that purpose, directed them to deliver this call to Allah. Likewise, taking the practice of the example by the prophets, the practising learned, the friends of Allah, the righteous among the believing servants of Allah are their heirs to these tasks. They can be found in all circumstances and at all times through their words and deeds, and with utmost effort and dedication, they invite people to Allah’s path and towards His obedience. They do so for the sake of Allah, out of compassion to Allah’s servants and desire for Allah’s reward. They also do so in emulation of the Prophet of Allah, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace. Indeed, he upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, declared,

مَنْ دَعَا إِلَى هُدًى كَانَ لَهُ مِنَ الْأَجْرِ مِثْلُ مَنْ أَتْبَعَهُ لَا يُنْقُصُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ أُجُورِهِمْ شَيْئًا. وَمَنْ دَعَا إِلَى ضَلَالَةٍ كَانَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْإِثْمِ مِثْلُ آثَامِ مَنْ أَتْبَعَهُ لَا يُنْقُصُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ آثَامِهِمْ شَيْئًا.

“He who invites to righteousness gains a reward equal to the rewards of those who follow him - without them suffering any reduction in their reward. He who invites to wickedness harvests sins equal to the sins of those who follow, without their penalty for sins being reduced.”³

¹ Surah 41 Fussilat Verse 33

² Surah 3 al-Imran Verse 104

³ Narrated by Ibn Majah from AbuHurayrah

He, upon whom be Allah's blessings, and peace added,
"He who points to good is like he who does it."¹ الدَّالُّ عَلَى الْخَيْرِ كَفَاعِلِهِ.

Many well-known verses of the Quran, al-hadith' and the sayings of the Companions address the command to invite people to Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, and to His path. There are many well-known benefits in such a vocation.

The Importance of Knowledge - its use in *Dakwah*

The general term of the summon [*dakwah*] unto Allah, the Exalted extends to cover such practices as seeking and spreading knowledge [*ilm*], giving sermons, warnings urging people to strive in the path of Allah and commanding good doing and forbidding wrongdoing.

If there is a qualified, competent caller unto Allah and His path, yet refrains from calling people, despite being capable, such an individual will be subject to the warning launched against those concealing the clear signs sent down by Allah and the Guidance. This restraint from calling to Allah's path invokes a dire warning and severe reprimand. Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, says,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنزَلْنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالْهُدَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّاهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْكِتَابِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّاعِنُونَ.

"Those who conceal the clear signs We have sent down, and the Guidance, after we have made it clear for the People in the Book, on them shall be Allah's curse, and the curse of those entitled to curse."²

And He, the Exalted, declares,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَشْتَرُونَ بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا أُولَٰئِكَ مَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ إِلَّا النَّارَ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ. أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَالْعَذَابَ بِالْمَغْفِرَةِ فَمَا أَصْبَرَهُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ.

¹ Narrated by Bazzar and Thabarani from Ibn Mas'ud and Sahal ibn Sa'd

² Surah 2 al-Baqara Verse 159

“Those who conceal Allah's revelations in the Book, and purchase for them a miserable profit, they swallow into themselves Naught but Fire; Allah will not address them on the Day of Resurrection, nor purify them: grievous will be their Penalty. They are the ones who buy Error in place of Guidance and Torment in place of Forgiveness. Ah! What boldness they show for the Fire!”¹

Propagate Knowledge - Do Not Conceal It

Allah has taken a covenant from those whom He has revealed His Book, knowledge and wisdom to invite His servants to make them aware of Him. The Exalted says,

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُونَهُ فَنَبَذُوهُ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ
وَاشْتَرَوْا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا فَبَيَّسَ مَا يَشْتَرُونَ.

“And remember Allah took a Covenant from the People of the Book, to make it known and clear to humankind, and not to hide it; but they threw it away behind their backs, and purchased with it some miserable gain! And vile was the bargain they made!”²

The Prophet, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace said,

مَنْ سُئِلَ عَنْ عِلْمٍ فَكَتَمَهُ أَلْجَمَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِلِجَامٍ مِنْ نَارٍ.

“Whosoever is asked about knowledge [*ilm*] and conceal it, Allah will bridle such people in the Day of Judgment with a bridle of Fire.”³

Verbal queries are clear to identify; however, there is also non-verbal expression according to the circumstances via the body language.

لِسَانُ الْحَالِ أَفْصَحُ مِنْ لِسَانِ الْمَقَالِ.

“Indeed, it has been said that ‘one’s conduct speaks volumes.’”

When a man, firmly established in Allah’s religion, admonisher in the ways of Allah and caller to the path of Allah with his knowledge looks upon the ignorant [*Jahiliyah*] who is not careful on matter

¹ Surah 2 al-Baqara Verses 174-175

² Surah 3 al-Imran Verse 187

³ Narrated by Ahmad from AbuHurayrah

concerning the hereafter and chasing the life on earth, and he cannot help but make it clear to them Allah's obligations, urging them to dedicate to His obedience and commands to avoid sins and prohibitions.

Who is a Derelict Learned [*Ulama*]?

As for the derelict learned, the negligence and reckless, they are never concerned over their noble role of calling unto Allah. Perhaps it never crosses their minds that their actions are similar to the ignorant in wasting time and negligent in duties to Allah as seen by their wicked words and deeds. As can be seen from their mannerisms, they are mostly no different from the ignorant except that they carry only the outward appearance of a learned. Such learned are not leaders to righteousness nor are they, callers, to virtue; or are they pointers to the path of Allah, the Sovereign, and the Supreme. What is more, some may well be the cause of common-folk boldness, and wild indulge into words and deeds which attract the annoyance of Allah and His Prophet. The reason being that when the common folk see those associated with knowledge and religion being themselves casual and careless about Allah's commands and obligation, and equally not prompt in acts of obedience, they may well be compelled to neglect and dereliction in religious commitments. They may be encouraged to ruinous and enormous crimes.

Whether they are conscious or not, the learned in this circumstance become among callers to evil and leaders towards wickedness. We seek Allah's refuge from degeneration and reversal, and supplicate Him to grant us well-being from every feared thing and injury upon ourselves and our beloved ones and to all Muslim, and a good ending for the righteous. Let there be no hostility except upon those who practice oppression.

Learned of Truth Cannot be a Party to the Neglects

For those who are faithful and religious, amongst the learned whom are firmly established in knowledge, there is no excuse for not directing the Muslims to the path of Allah and His prophet after witnessing the ordinary folks' neglect of knowledge and guidance, failing in Allah's command and religious obligations, persistently embarked on those

forbidden by the laws and their contentment with ignorance rather than knowledge; with wickedness rather than righteousness; and with falsehood rather than truth.

Besides, if the laymen are addicted to lusts and the satisfaction of temporary appetites, and prefer current life to the Hereafter, and the transient to the abiding, the people of truth and religion, should not keep quiet but instead should counsel these folks to uphold Allah's commands and invite them to righteousness and virtue, warn and prevent them against committing and wrongdoing. Indeed, the learned should try their best and exploit all resources for this purpose because this is part of their obligation, whether it is an individual and collective responsibility.

They are not excusable primarily after Allah has taught them His knowledge and bound them to preserve it, eventually adopting the role of heirs to His Book and the practices [*Sunna*] of his Messenger.

The Prophet, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, says,
الْعُلَمَاءُ وَرَثَةُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ. إِنَّ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ لَمْ يُوْرَثُوا دِينَارًا وَلَا دِرْهَمًا، وَإِنَّمَا وَرَثُوا الْعِلْمَ.

“The learned are heirs of the prophets. Verily the prophets left neither dinars nor dirhams, but they left behind knowledge to be inherited.”¹

According to another narration, عُلَمَاءُ أُمَّتِي كَأَنْبِيَاءِ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ.

“The learned of my people are like the prophets of the People of Israel.”²

Prophets of the People of Israel

One prophet after another was sent to the People of Israel to renew the Laws of Moses, peace be upon him, and upon our prophet be the best of Allah's blessings and peace, their tasks were to call the people to uphold

¹ This hadith was narrated by Anas r.a. as recorded in *Al-Jam' As-Shaghir* by Ahmad, others recorded it as narrated by Abu Darda'as *marfu'*, and it was affirmed by Ibnu Hibban and Al Hakim At-Termidzi. Others said that this hadith is valid. There are others who classified it as weak in sanad. However, there are methods that classified this hadith as having a valid origin as explained by Ibnu Hajar.

² It was affirmed by discussion from Al-Fakrur-Razi, Ibnu Qudamah, Al-Asnawi, Al-Baziri and others. While Imam Suyuthi said in his book *Ad-Durar* and so did Ibnu Hajar that it has no origin.

the Law and act upon it, to warn them against neglecting Allah's command and embarking upon what He has forbidden.

Such prophets used to get commands via revelation as can be envisaged from the recorded literature on their affairs, and this continued until Allah sent our prophet Isa bin Mariam, peace be upon him, with Laws abrogating the Laws of Moses, peace be upon him. However, the People of Israel rejected his message and alleged his mother, peace be upon her, with false and grave charges. Then there was an intermission after Isa, and peace be upon him until Allah sent His Servant and Messenger, Muhammad, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, the leader of the Children of Adam with the Qur'an, a comprehensive law, repealing all previous laws. All the Jews and Christians denied and refuted his Message except those few that Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, willed to guide.

Muhammad, the Last of Prophets

May Allah's blessings and peace be upon him,

When Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, made Muhammad, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, the Seal of Prophets and Messengers, Allah, the Exalted says,

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا.

“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Messenger of Allah, and the Seal of the Prophets: and Allah has full knowledge of all things.”¹

With this verse, Allah Seal the Prophet-hood and Messengers, and with Muhammad, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, the perfection and conclusion of Prophet-hood be attained. Just as Allah had begun and opened it with him, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, Allah ended and concluded. After which there shall be neither prophet nor messenger after him, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, and with His favour, graciousness and bounty, He has willed that the pious, learned men [*ulama*] of his (the prophet, upon whom be

¹ Surah 33 al-Ahzab Verse 40.

blessings and peace) community become his heirs, his vice-regents and the upholders of the Laws that the prophet delivered.

More significant, their status in piousness and devoutness resembled the prophets of the people of Israel in some respects or most matters, even though they will not achieve prophet-hood after the departure of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, and the 'path to it' is closed. No matter how hard a person works, he cannot be acquired to be a messenger or prophet. It is not to be attained by man's effort even under any circumstances as after Muhammad, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, appointment and Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, sealed the Prophethood and Messengers with him.

Continuing the Call to Islam

The state of affairs being as such, one should also know that Allah willed that there shall be in Muhammad's people Renewers and Callers unto righteousness, and this is particularly necessary when the symbols of religion become effaced, the landmarks of certainty obliterated, the commands of Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, neglected, and the prohibitions of the Laws overlooked. With this regard, a hadith received from the Prophet, upon whom be blessings and peace, said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْعَثُ لِهَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ مَنْ يُجَدِّدُ لَهَا دِينَهَا عَلَى رَأْسِ كُلِّ مِائَةِ سَنَةٍ.

“Indeed, Allah delegates to this people one who will revive it and renew its religion at the beginning of every hundred years.”

The learned, may Allah show them mercy, have said that at the period of the first hundred years, it was the virtuous Caliph Umar bin Abdul Aziz, may Allah show him mercy. He was a Quraishy from the Umayyah clan.¹

At the period of the second hundred years, it was al-Imam Muhammad bin Idris as-Shafi'i (Imam as-Shafi'i), may Allah show him mercy, from the Mutthalib clan.²

¹ Deceased 101 years after Hijrah.

² He was also a Quraishy and passed away in 204 years after Hijrah.

During the beginning of the third hundred years, it was al-Imam ibnu Suraij as-Shafi'i¹ or may also be as-Sheikh Abul Hassan al-Ash'ary.²

At the period of the fourth hundred years, it was al-Qadhi Abubakar al-Baqillani al-Maliki³ or may even be as-Shaykh Abu Hamid al-Isfara'ini as-Shafi'i.⁴

During the time of the fifth hundred years, it was al-Imam Hujjatul Islam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali.⁵

There were disagreement about who the renewer was during the time of the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth hundred years - which registered the completion of a thousand years since the Hijrah of the Prophet and with it began the recording of history, which was a suggestion from *Amir Al-Mu'minin*, Ali bin Abi Talib during the time of Caliphate of *Amir Al-Muminin* Umar bin Al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with both of them.

Similarly, there was also disagreement about who the Renewer was during the period of the third and fourth hundred years as we have partly indicated. In one discussion on this topic, that is, concerning the reported hadith about the Renewers of this religion during the 100-year spans, *al-Hafizh* as-Suyuthi, may Allah show him mercy, said that it was possible for renewers during every hundred years, can be a group of leading Imams, who collectively bring about the renewal of this religion. What he said is possible both implicitly and explicitly. Now, insofar as the virtuous predecessors [*salaf salleh*] indicated the Renewer as an individual, neither unanimously or with disagreement, except for perhaps just one and again with caution, thus making the definite opinion to disregard as-Suyuthi's account. Such warning has been the long-held tradition on as-Suyuthi's statement. It appears that that was the position. Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, is the All-knowing and the infinitely acquainted.

¹ He was also called al-Baz al-Asyhab and deceased on 306 years after Hijrah.

² Deceased 324 years after Hijrah.

³ Deceased 403 years after Hijrah.

⁴ Deceased in Baghdad 406 years after Hijrah.

⁵ Imam Ghazali passed away 505 years after Hijrah.

Special Attribute of this *Ummah* - Renewal and Revival

This revival and renewal is a unique attribute of the people of Muhammad, upon whom be blessings and peace, on the facts that there is no messenger after him, nor is there a prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, and all the Prophets and Messengers.)

We were informed in a report that as revelations ceased upon the death and departure of the Prophet, upon whom be blessings and peace, the Earth cried out to its Lord that no prophet will walk over it; then Allah willed that for this nation [*umma*] there be the Pivotal Supports [*al-Awtad*] and Substitutes [*al-Abdal*] chosen from among Allah's saints and gnostics. They are the heirs of the prophets and their successors. There are reported hadith which state that among these elect of Allah, some have hearts which resemble the soul of Ibrahim, peace be upon him, the Friend of Allah, as well as other prophets of Allah and His Angels upon them, be peace. In the same vein, some statements of Companions of the Prophet [*Athsar*] addressed the same point. One such narration stated,

لَا تَزَالُ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِي ظَاهِرِينَ عَلَى الْحَقِّ، لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ مَنْ خَذَلَهُمْ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ، وَهُمْ عَلَى ذَلِكَ.

“There will always be a group from my people striving for the truth, unworried by those who frustrate them until Allah's appointed hour and even then they are still at their task.”

Another recorded, لَيَجِدَنَّ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قَوْمًا مِنْ أُمَّتِي هُمْ مِثْلُ حَوَارِيِّهِ.

“Verily, the son of Maryam (Isa, upon him, be peace) will find folk of my people very much like his disciples.”

Amir al-Mu'minin Ali, may Allah honour him, invoked, “O Allah! Let the Earth not lack such a man who establishes and upholds Your Cause; be he obvious and famous, or unknown and overwhelmed force by the people to do so”, until the end of what was related in his speech.

Thus it was evident from what we did and/or not mentioned so far that there will always be in this people one who will invite others to Allah, His path, towards establishing His religion and preserving His ordinances at all times and places. Even in corrupt times and falsehood holds sways, evil and hostile people hold the ring this religion with

Allah's aid will triumph and will spread with the light of Allah, as the Exalted says,

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ.

It is He Who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth, that he may proclaim it over all religion, even though the Pagans may detest (it).¹

The Ignorant Must Seek Knowledge

Now, for any ignorant man, there is no excuse in failing to seek knowledge that Allah has made obligatory upon him. The Prophet, upon whom be blessings and peace, said, طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ.

“Seeking knowledge is incumbent upon every Muslim.”

Also, the knowledgeable instructors have equally no excuse in failing to instruct others in what Allah has taught them, whether the knowledge [*ilm*] is for individual responsibility [*Fardhu Ain*] or collectively [*Fardhu Kifayah*].

The knowledge [*ilm*], which benefits both the upper echelons and the common folk, is that which takes one away from this world to the Hereafter, from sins to obedience, and from distraction to alert, spiritual vigilance. These instructions should be accompanied with sermons, admonition, warnings and reprimands. It should also remind of Allah's pledges of rewards for obedient, virtuous people and of penalties for the wicked and disobedient people, and which Allah explained in the Qur'an and narrated by His commissioned prophet as guidance and explanations. Such instructions soften the hearts and cause the souls to submit in humility. The self will yield and be submissive. Allah, the Exalted says, فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ.

“If a contingent from every expedition remained behind, they could devote themselves to studies in religion, and admonish the people when

¹ Surah 61 as-Saff Verse 9

they return to them, that thus they (may learn) to guard themselves (against evil).”¹

In a hadith narrated by Handhala, may Allah blessed him, that he told the Prophet, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace,

نَكُونُ عِنْدَكَ فَتَذَكِّرُنَا بِالْجَنَّةِ وَالنَّارِ، حَتَّى كَأَنَّ نَرَاهَا رَأْيَ عَيْنٍ يُنْبِئُهُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ.

“When we are with you, you speak to us about Paradise and Hell until it is there before our very eyes.”

One may notice that Allah’s Book and the practices of His Prophet are full of words, which enthralls people to virtue and restrain them from wickedness as the verses of the al-Quran and the hadiths are full of glad tidings and severe warnings.

Make a Habit of Attending Gatherings of the Ulama

The use of these techniques characterises the gatherings of the practising learned and the righteous Imams. They would deliver sermons surrounded by large numbers of Muslims admonish them with the Days of Allah and His bounties and urge them to establish His commands and avoid his prohibitions. People would benefit from these practices as evidenced by such virtuous signs as fear of Allah, tears, and prompt repentance and return to Allah. Life histories of both predecessors and successors are full of such incidents. Some of these include Al-Junayd bin Muhammad², the “Lord of the Folk” during his time, and also Abi Jamrah³ of Baghdad and Yahya bin Mu’adh ar-Razi they were the earlier generations.

Later-generation were Al-Imam al-Ghazali, As-shaikh Muhyiddin Abdul Qadir al-Jailani⁴, also as-Shaikh as-Sohrawardi⁵, the author of ‘*Awariful Ma’arif*’,

¹ Surah 9 at Taubah Verse 122

² He passed away in Baghdad in the year 297 after Hijrah.

³ He passed away in Naisabur 258 years after Hijrah.

⁴ He passed away in Baghdad 561 years after Hijrah.

⁵ He was also known as Abu Hafsh, deceased in Baghdad 632 years after Hijrah.

There were many other Imams, callers to virtue and the Path of righteousness. Work in this field continued until a period whereby distractions took hold of ordinary people and the call to Allah diminished. Disregard of the Hereafter dominated, and hearts were taken over by worldly affairs and discussion concerning its vanity.

Why are there only a few Practitioner of *Dakwah*?

This state of affairs surfaced when calamity became all-pervasive; the disease prolonged; this situation existed because admonishers and callers to Allah, who did so graciously and with conviction, were few. Ignorance triumph and negligence of the Laws are common amongst the people prevails to such a degree that those who knew nothing about the virtuous and righteous predecessors thought that even in their (the predecessors) times things were like that, and this is far from real! What has gone is gone beyond recall. Knowledge faded when the learned disappeared, and the number of its earnest seekers also dwindles. As mentioned in a Sahih Hadith:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ إِنْ تَزَاعَا يَتَزَعَا مِنْ النَّاسِ وَلَكِنْ يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ بِقَبْضِ أَهْلِهِ حَتَّى إِذَا لَمْ يَبْقَ عَالِمًا اتَّخَذَ النَّاسُ رُؤُوسًا جُهَالًا، إِذَا سُئِلُوا أَفْتَوْا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ فَضَلُّوا وَأَضَلُّوا.

“Indeed, Allah does not withhold knowledge by removing it from the people but by withholding its people (the learned) until such time comes when there is not a single learned man. Then people appoint the ignorant as their heads. When asked, such leaders, give a legal verdict that is not supported by knowledge. Thus they go astray and lead others astray.”¹

One must see that the speech of these ignorant pretenders is more harmful than their silence! One can know the difference between the learned of religion, who are the prophets’ heirs and imams of righteousness, as opposed to the ignorant who claimed to be ‘learned’ and whose image resemble learned. The former lead people with their guidance and make clear to them the way of their Lord as well as what gives them success and salvation, both in this world and the next.

¹ Narrated by Ibn Umar r.a from Ash-Habus Sunan

The latter misguide people with their verdicts [*fatwa*] and confuse them in their affairs. I shall give a fuller account of the false state of the ignorant who resemble the learned in their mannerism and appearance but are otherwise utterly lacking in the substance of knowledge, fear of Allah [*taqwa*]. They are seeking what material benefits religion provides and guidance of those who are deluded by worldly life, and it seduced them. The pursuit of lust has captured them. Allah, the Exalted, refers to them in the verses of appetite captured.

قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا. الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا.

Say: “Shall we tell you of those who lose most in respect of their deeds?” Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life, while they thought that they were acquiring good by their works?”¹

When the Call to Allah diminish Innovations surfaces

Then innovations [*bid`ah*] appeared; atrocities prevailed; and the individual and public display a rampage disregard and negligence towards Allah and the Hereafter.

In such circumstances, there is no excuse for holders of truth and religion from the people of knowledge and certainty to refrain from explaining the truth and provide counsel, and call people to Allah [*dakwah*] and His path, with their words and deeds, as well as any other resources, to end innovations, and eliminate the resulting atrocities. Indeed, he, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, says,

إِذَا ظَهَرَتِ الْفِتْنُ {أَوْ قَالَ الْبِدْعُ} وَسُبَّ أَصْحَابِي فَلْيُظْهِرِ الْعَالِمُ عِلْمَهُ، فَمَنْ لَمْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَعَلَيْهِ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ، لَا يَقْبَلُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ صَرْفًا وَلَا عَدْلًا.

“When trials appear {or innovation according to another version}, and my companions are abused, then the learned should demonstrate his knowledge. Whosoever fails to do so, upon him be Allah’s curse and the curse of the angels and the entire humankind, neither repentance nor compensation will be accepted from him.”

¹ Surah 18 al-Kahf Verse 103-104

Do not be swayed by suspicion and doubts

Perhaps some learned fall under the misconceptions that restrain them from calling people to the truth and spreading knowledge.

Among such misconception is when one might claim that since one does not put into practice what one knows, so how can one teach people and preach it! Already there was a report on this matter indicating of a substantial penalty upon such misconception, and it should be said to him that teaching knowledge is part of putting it into practice, and he who teaches but does not put his knowledge into practice is infinitely better than he who neither puts into practice nor transmits what he knows. If one is incapable of performing the entire duty, he should not fail to do part of it. Furthermore, it is incumbent upon you to instruct, strive and be determined to practice what one knows. It is beyond doubt that there is divinely prescribed penalty upon those who instruct others but does not himself put into practice what he knows. Yet such penalty is more applicable and justified for those who neither practise nor instruct. Because the former has two obligations to Allah, however, he discharged one and not the other. While the latter abandoned both obligations altogether, thus inevitably he will eventually face a more severe penalty.

Another misconception is when one said to oneself that the call to Allah and guidance to worship Allah, the Exalted, is a noble duty and a high station. It is the task of religious Imams of righteousness for which they do not qualify. I am not like that and not one of them. Then he drives himself to self-diminution, self-contempt, humility and awareness of his defects so that he can be silent instead of making the call to Allah and guiding to the right path. He imagines that his attitude is the praiseworthy humility which comes from one who knows his self's true nature and lives according to its limitations! This attitude is, however, mistaken. Because the truth does not hinder truth nor does doing good remove 'good'. It is still binding upon such a learned to strive hard to call people to righteousness and guide them to virtue. He should do so with humility and submissiveness as well as a sense of fear and humbleness in himself. He should make himself conscious of his failure, and he should put the self down. That is perfection. That sums up the virtues of men who are

neither driven back by the whispers of Satan, nor warded off by his fantasies and deceptions, nor influenced by his bid to promote wickedness in the guise of righteousness.

Yet another misconception is when a learned is preoccupied with his continuous litanies [*awrad*] and devotional worship like recitation of the Qur'an, remembrance etc. and then perceive that that is better for him, and that those are more appropriate than calling people to Allah and His path and spreading the knowledge that is beneficial to religion. But the truth is that a call to Allah and the spread of useful knowledge for the sake of Allah is better than the supererogatory prayers and recitation of litanies because knowledge has over-reaching benefits and overall need by the elect, the common, the young and the old. A hadith reported,

فَضْلُ الْعَالِمِ عَلَى الْعَابِدِ كَفَضْلِي عَلَى أَدْنَى رَجُلٍ مِنْ أَصْحَابِي.

“The distinction of a learned man upon a devotee is like the importance of me to the lowest (status) of my companions.”¹

Another hadith says,

فَضْلُ الْعَالِمِ عَلَى الْعَابِدِ كَفَضْلِ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ عَلَى سَائِرِ الْكَوَاكِبِ.

“The distinction of a learned man upon a devotee is like that of the moon in the night of Power upon other stars.”²

A Devotee must not neglect his litanies

Do not mean gives up litanies [*awrads*] and fall short in various types of devotions [*ibadat*]. Instead, he should devote specific times for them, times in which it is best to confine oneself to them, especially at night and such periods of the day when he is not engaged with teaching. Indeed, al-Imam Malik, may Allah show him mercy, says: “Seek this knowledge in such a way as not to harm devotions, and seek this devotion in such a way as not to harm the knowledge. al-Imam ash-Shafi used to divide the night into three parts: a third he devoted to prayer, a third to the study of religious knowledge and a third to sleep. In his chapter on the

¹ Narrated from Termidzi from Abu Imaamah.

² Narrated by Abu Nu'aim in the 'Book al-Hilyah' from Mu'az.

arrangement of litanies in ‘*Ihya Ulumiddin*’, *Hujjatul-Islam*, may Allah show him mercy, has indeed mentioned how the learned should manage time¹. The Learned should adhere to what he says in that book and Allah will guide him.

Put aside suspicion and negative thoughts

Now the misconceptions mentioned above are only some of the traps into which some learned endued with being mindful of their duties and awe of Allah might fall. However, as for misconceptions and whims experienced by learned who are not endued with piety and reverence for Allah and who are not eager to put their knowledge into practice, they derive from many things. They all derive from the states of distraction and confusion, which hinder them from calling people to Allah’s path and the dissemination of knowledge for the sake of Allah.

One of the hindrances is the preoccupation with worldly things, matters of day-to-day living, and the business of ingratiating themselves with the wicked people of high status. Another is procrastination and the habit of whiling time away from one minute to another. Another reason why they keep covering up their states and weakness is that should they call people to Allah and the Here-after, while their desires are different, then their weakness, evil deeds and wicked ways will show they will fall in people’s esteem eventually. Their prestige, which they are eager to keep intact, would also vanish. They are willing to keep their hold tight on the hearts of people. So, power and prestige are among the most potent worldly delights and constitute the most predominant lust.

Some of ‘so-called’ learned become busy seeking sciences which do not constitute a part needed for calling people to Allah, His path, for warning about Allah, His days and bounty, nor are they required in connection with His promise of reward and sign of punishment.

Yet such people count themselves as learned, so they are considered similarly as ignorant people. For example, a man whose

¹ Imam alHaddad referred to Vol I Book of Worship Chapter 10 ‘Arrange of *Awrad*’ which we have translated into Vol II of the Excellence and Secrets of the Night Vigil.

knowledge, evolve around the intricacies of logic, rare subsidiaries of jurisprudence and legal verdicts or literary and linguistic matters are subsumed under this category. Such academia is not the sciences of calling people to Allah and His path, nor do they inspire fear from meeting Allah and in His pledge of reward and warning of punishment. They never caution against dereliction in His commands and breach of His prohibitions. They may, however, be as general as sciences, but they are not among the beneficial sciences nor are they indispensable. They are of no need on the part of people eager to uphold their religion and anxious about the world of the Hereafter.

Categories of Knowledge

It has been said that sciences are many, but they are not all beneficial. Some are like foods and medicaments; some are useful and important to everybody, others harmful. A detailed account of them is too long to include here. In summary, holder of such knowledge, which consists of these subject matters which are unimportant and useless to religion, will only be called a ‘learned’ only in name; there is no reality to the title. In consequence, they may well be impelled to the wrath of his Lord, self-annihilation and total loss in the Hereafter. It, therefore, behoves a man who knows such sciences to add to the religious sciences which deal with the Here-after and from which stems the fear and awe of Allah and abound in promises of reward and warning of penalty. Such sciences urge a man to renounce the world and attend to the Hereafter.

Sufyan Athawri¹ had these matters in mind when he said, “At first we seek knowledge for motives other than Allah, knowledge refused to be sought for if the motives are other than that of Allah.” Imam Al-Ghazali, may Allah be pleased with him, presented it in the same meaning.

Now just as both the Allah-fearing learned and the confused ones may be exposed to fantasies and ideas that frustrate them and hinder from calling people to Allah and pointing them to virtue, an ignorant man may

¹ He was master and leading pious learned man and `ilm of Hadiths of his period. He was born and raised in Kufah and passed away in Basrah 161 years after Hijrah

also suffer illusions which hinder and hamper him from seeking knowledge and paying close attention to religion. For instance, one might imagine that if he seeks knowledge and grasps it, obligations to Allah and His servants will pursue him, and he will have a duty to fulfil Allah's commands and avoid His prohibitions and sins. As a result, he imagines that if he does not seek it, he will be completely free of these obligations, and this is a deadly misconception and an invalid excuse.

Indeed, some of the ignorant abandon the assemblies of the people of truth where people are called to Allah for fear that he may hear what may urge him to obey Allah, avoid what Allah has forbidden, or what will urge him to renounce the world and the lusts which already took hold of him. He may also hear the promise of Allah's reward and Allah's warnings of penalties.

The ignorant man imagines he will be saved from all that and absolved from the attendant obligations because of his ignorance and because he has kept away from the truth and its exponents! Allah will not excuse him for his ignorance, nor will it benefit him except to increase his distance from Allah, while in the hereafter affliction, disgrace and punishment await him.

This World pulls man away from the pursuit of Knowledge

The total pursuit of the mundane, exclusive preoccupation with it, seduction with its gewgaws (frilly clothes), accumulation of its vanities (possession of luxury goods), have overwhelmed this ignorant man so much that he had no time to seek the truth nor knowledge of religion. As a result, he loses both of faith and the next world. Immersed in ignorance and profound distraction, he is under the illusion that panting after this world is more critical, more binding and more appropriate than the quest for knowledge of religion, its close examination as well as knowing Allah's commandments and prohibitions.

Regarding such people, Allah, the Exalted, says,

يَعْلَمُونَ ظَاهِرًا مِّنَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ غَافِلُونَ.

“They know but the outer things in the life of this world, but of the End of things they are heedless.”¹

And the Exalted, says,

وَرَضُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاطْمَأْنَنُوا بِهَا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا غَافِلُونَ. أُولَٰئِكَ مَاوَاهُم النَّارُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ.

“Those who rest not their hope on their meeting with Us, but are pleased and satisfied with the life of the Present, and those who heed not Our Signs, their abode is the Fire, because of the (evil) they earned.”²

The truth of the matter is that an earnest quest for the knowledge of religion, its close study and the fulfilment of Allah’s obligations by knowledge and practice constitute the firm foundation on which everything depends. The affairs of the world, the urgently important ones, follow from that knowledge while the unimportant ones are prohibited and should be given up.

In reverse, ignorant, heedless people stand things on their heads; they target the discarded, castaway desires, thus showing how dreadful and harmful ignorance is. It also shows how it is a calamity and a disgrace to the ignorant in this world and the Hereafter.

For this reason, it has been said,

مَا يَبْلُغُ الْأَعْدَاءُ مِنْ جَاهِلٍ مَا يَبْلُغُ الْجَاهِلُ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ

“Try as they might, the enemies of the ignorant cannot match,
What havoc the ignorant can wreak upon himself.”

And it has also been said:

وَفِي الْجَهْلِ قَبْلَ الْمَوْتِ مَوْتُ لَأَهْلِهِ فَأَجْسَادُهُمْ قَبْلَ الْقُبُورِ قُبُورٌ

“The Ignorance is like a dead man before death grips upon him.
Their flesh is like a tomb for their life before they are buried.”

¹ Surah 30 ar-Rum Verse 7

² Surah 10 Yunus Verse 7-8

The Ignorance is everywhere

Ignorant dominates the people of these bad times. It has taken them wherever it wishes; therefore, most of them are unaware of what the truth and religion are nor do they know what the Hereafter is and how the ultimate return to Allah comes about, and this has become a considerable calamity. Its harm touches all - the ignorant, the educated, the elect and the common. Its damage on the 'ignorant' is no secret because they have abandoned an obligation imposed upon them by Allah - namely to get to know his religion and to study its laws.

Danger upon the Learned

Its harm upon the educated is figured in terms of dereliction in calling people to Allah's path and teaching others what they do not know of its laws when they are in a position to do that. If the ignorant do not see that they have a duty to seek to understand what obligations Allah has ordained upon them, the learned have to teach them, and they are forbidden to keep quiet. Allah will not excuse their failure to educate the ignorant, and this must be a matter of utmost importance to the learned. Given the fact that there are phases of slackness in Islam, people now can be said to experience one of them as the situation has deteriorated to such a point that members of the Islamic community do not know Allah's obligations upon them.

They do not know what constitutes obedience to Him and what represents defiance. They have become unaware that they have to get to know the relevant knowledge and then put it into practice. Hence it is the duty of learned and callers to Allah to take the initiative to stress the importance to seek knowledge and urge them to pursue it.

Now you should know that in Islam there are phases of recessions, just as some of the people these days are experiencing. Many of them are under the wings of Islam, yet they do not know of Allah's obligation upon them to obey Him, and what is prohibit upon them in order not to commit sins to Him. Nor do they know that it is incumbent upon them to study all that and practice them. So when will they realise this! And take the lessons to learn the knowledge that they do not know and yet it is obligatory upon them.

Thus it becomes the duty of the learned and the callers to Allah to correct this situation, to make them aware with the obligation and responsibilities to Allah, and to urge them to seek the knowledge and begins this process for them. For indeed, it is not possible for those who do not know what they do not know to find the knowledge and get to know it.

Now these phrases which occur in Islam and are experienced by callers to Allah, His religion and to rejuvenate it, resemble in some respects, their counterparts which happened during intervals between prophets. In his first book *Tanbihul Ghafilin* written at the end of the tenth century, ash-Shaikh al-Arif Abdul Al-Wahhab Ahmad ash-Sha'arani¹, may Allah show him mercy, points to this state of slackness. It is different from the state of alienation which will overtake the religion at the end of time and with the approach of the 'appointed hour' about which the Prophet, upon whom be blessings and peace, says:

بَدَأَ الدِّينَ غَرِيبًا وَسَيَعُودُ غَرِيبًا كَمَا بَدَأَ، فَطُوبَى لِلْغُرَبَاءِ الَّذِينَ يُحْيُونَ مَا أَمَاتَ النَّاسُ فِي سُنَّتِي.
“This religion began an alien and will once again be an alien as it began. Blessedness therefore upon the aliens who keep alive my practices that men have rendered moribund.”

He, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, also says,

دَخَلَ النَّاسُ فِي هَذَا الدِّينِ أَفْوَاجًا، وَسَيُخْرَجُونَ مِنْهُ أَفْوَاجًا كَمَا دَخَلُوا.

“People entered this religion in waves, and they will get out of it in waves in the same manner as they entered.”

Between the knowledgeable and the Ignorance

At present, some people do not know what the truth and religion are and do not know that such knowledge is an obligation. Some know that such knowledge is an obligation but do not seek it out of neglect and carelessness or preoccupation with worldly affairs and greedy acquisition of worldly vanities and enjoyment of its appetites.

¹ He is Imam Arif - Billah Abu Muhammad Abdul Wahhab bin Ahmad bin Ali Asy-Sya'rani from a village called Abu Sya'rah from the area of Manufiyyah in the west of Cairo. He was born, raised there and passed away in Cairo in 983 years after Hijrah.

Among them are those who knew that such knowledge is an obligation and sought it but failed to put it into practice. And there are those who sought such knowledge and put it into practice but did so not solely for the sake of Allah but worldly motives and vain desires.

All these groups have gone astray and are seduced away from the path of righteousness in different degrees. One of the Imams, among the virtuous predecessors, may Allah's blessings be upon all of them, put it best when he said: "All the people are dead, except the learned; and the learned are dead, except those who put into practice what they know; and those who practice what they know, are all dead except those who act exclusively for Allah's sake; and all those who do whatever they do for Allah's sake are dead except those who suffer the tremor of awe while they do what they do for Allah's sake; and those who suffer the tremor of awe are themselves in grave danger." That is the meaning of their warning.

From the previous presentation of the state of neglect of knowledge of religion and search for the truth among the common folk, as well as being content with ignorance and blindness of heart rather than knowledge and guidance, it should be clear that the responsibility upon the callers to Allah is correspondingly great. They must take the initiative and guide the common folk as well as the elite. They should disseminate the truth amongst them so that every ignorant person shall know it and so the path to Allah becomes apparent to those seeking it and Allah's argument is fully established on the doomed people.

Be Compassionate and Kind in your Call to Allah

Those who call people to Allah and the learned need to be extremely compassionate, and kind to Muslims, and very eager and anxious to guide and invite them to what constitutes salvation, and felicity for both here and the next world. They also need to be extremely patient, show endurance and be gentle, gracious and compassionate.

Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, said to His Messenger, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, **وَاحْفَظْ جَنَاحَكَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ**.

“But lower your wing (in gentleness) to believers.”¹

The Exalted says,

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ.

“Indeed, part of the Mercy from Allah that you do deal gently with them. Were you severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you.”²

When some severity and harshness are indispensable, then severity and harshness should be demonstrated outwardly only, and in a manner that does not lead to estrangement and bad blood.

When they, the truthful and callers to Allah, suffer harassment from the ignorant because of their vocation, they must be patient and not to pay any attention and to say nothing but good.

Allah, the Glorious, says to His Messenger, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ.

“Hold to forgiveness; command what is right; but turn away from the ignorant.”³

And, He Transcendent and Glorious is He, says,

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا، وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا.

“And the servants of Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say, “Peace!”⁴

Even the Prophets faced difficulties in dakwah

The prophets, the messengers and their followers, namely the Imams of the truth and righteousness, have suffered enormously at the hands of the ignorant and those who do not care for Allah. They armed themselves with patience and showed perseverance in their job, so seeking Allah’s favour. The sufferings have doubled their eagerness to guide people to

¹ Surah 15 al-Hijr (at the end of) Verse 88

² Verse 159 of Surah 3 Ala Imran

³ Surah 7 al-A`raf Verse 199

⁴ Surah 25 al-Furqan Verse 63

the path of Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, to council them and to urge them to uphold Allah's commands and avoid what He forbids, choose the route followed by the prophets of Allah, His messengers, the Imams of those people, and similarly followed by the righteous callers to Allah from the people of Muhammad to their religion.

However, should the callers to Allah suffer no open retort or harassment and gets no positive responses, or should they get positive responses but no follow-up practices can be observed on the part of people, these callers to Allah have no excuse in giving up the call to Allah and His path even though over a long period yet the number of respondents is a few.

Nowadays, as in the cases we have outlined above prevails in most Islamic countries. Callers to Allah who council people to His path are not harassed and get no blunt retort. Instead, their message may be accepted or rejected. People might put into practice what they have learned. Later on, however, there might be open rejection, gross harassment against callers to the truth and counsellors of religion. Callers to Allah should take advantage of the current phase and call people to Allah before the tougher days come when the truth is openly rejected and thrown back to its callers. They might be brutally harassed, even before they call out to the truth and righteousness, and this is what is to happen as the appointed hour approaches when its omens and general signs indicated in the relevant literature show.

Among the bounties of Allah upon callers to Allah at present is that when they call and council in general and specific terms, they get neither retort nor harassment, except tyrannical arrogant rulers and authorities. Callers to Allah would better be cautious and avoid being accurate in their instruction. In that way, they will escape the ugly response, trial and harassment, because the callers may buckle under the pressure; they may lose patience, become fed up, or take the sufferings at the hands of the errant as a reason to refrain from counselling people to seek Allah's path and permission to give up calling people to truth and righteousness. The Messenger of Allah s.a.w. set an example for them to model themselves on. When informed of someone's evil deeds, he used

to be implicit in address; he would say: “Why do some folks say such a thing and do such thing”. His ‘intention’ [*niat*] was to strengthen bonds between people, to be gentle and gracious to them and to cover their faults. Indeed, Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, describes his excellent character in the following verses,

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ.

“And you (stand) on an exalted standard of character.”¹

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ.

“We sent thee not, but as a mercy for all creatures.”²

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَؤُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ.

“Now have come unto you a Messenger from amongst yourselves: it grieves him that you should perish: ardently anxious is he over you: to the Believers is he most kind and merciful.”³

May the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him and may Allah give him greater honour and further ennoble him, and may He grant us that we follow him most perfectly. As the Exalted says,

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا.

“You have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful example for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the praise (invocations) of Allah.”⁴

The Learned has no excuse not to Call to Allah

In the light of the foregoing, it is now clear that the learned of religion has neither an excuse nor leave to give up calling people to Allah and counselling Muslims and showing them their obligation of obeying Allah and avoiding what He has forbidden.

Equally, there is no excuse on the part of the ignorant not to accept and respond to what they are invited to act on it. Theirs is the duty to seek

¹ Surah 68 al-Qalam Verse 4

² Surah 21 Al-Anbiya Verse 107

³ Surah 9 at-Taubah Verse 128

⁴ Surah 33 Ahzab Verse 21

such counsel ardently and anxiously and to give it priority over all other important matters in their lives. If the ignorant are derelict in this quest, learned of religion and callers unto the path of the Lord of all worlds cannot afford to keep quiet and give up their obligation or else they will equally fail to discharge their obligation and be partners in the disregard for the duty of Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He.

Imam Ghazali, may Allah show him mercy, said in the conclusion of the third chapter of his book on “Commanding Good and Forbidding Evil” [*Amar Ma`ruf Wa Nahi Munkar*] in the *Ihya` Ulumiddin* that be aware (in this period) that anyone who sits at home wherever it maybe he is not far from guilty” for just sitting because he should be guiding people, teaching them, urging them to do good. The fact is that most people in towns do not know the stipulations of prayers, let alone those in the villages and deserts. Among them are the Bedouins, the Kurds, and the Turkomans and other kinds of people.

Ideally, a sheikh should be in every mosque and village

It is an obligation that a learned in Jurisprudence [*Faqih*] should be available in every state, every town, every neighbourhood and mosque to teach people their religion. It is also an obligation on each *Faqih*, having completed individual obligation [*Fardhu `Ain*] and now at the stage of collective responsibility [*Fardhu Kifayah*] to go out to people near his town be they rural or Bedouins or Kurds or others, and teach them their religion and the duties of their Islamic Law. When he goes out, he should not eat their food because it may have been acquired by dubious and unlawful means. If one *Faqih* does that, the rest will be absolved.¹ (i) Otherwise, all learned and the ignorant become guilty either for failing to go out (in the case of alim) or failing to seek knowledge (on the part of the ignorant). After knowing the stipulation of prayers, every common man duty is to teach another person; otherwise, he will be an accomplice in sin. It is a fact that no one is born ‘learned’. Indeed it is a duty of the

¹ Here, Imam al-Haddad is describing about the conditions in and around Hadhramaut and some areas where ignorance still prevails.

learned to broadcast the message and everyone who learns one issue is counted among the knowledgeable of that particular issue.

I believe that the Learned in Science of Jurisprudence carry a more significant burden of sin because they are the most competent and the most appropriate to handle their particular knowledge. If the professionals down the tools, life would come to a standstill because they do jobs necessary to the interests of the people, and the responsibility of a *Faqih* is to teach what the Messenger, may blessings and peace be upon him, delivered. Indeed, the learned are heirs of the prophets. One has no business to sit at home and refrain from going to the mosque because he has observed that people are not praying correctly.

Instead, when he knows that they do not pray properly, he must go out and teach and admonish them. Likewise, whosoever is certain that in the market place there is an evil going on all the time, and he is capable of changing it, he should not absolve himself from the obligation by just sitting at home, on the contrary, he must go out and reach out.

If he cannot manage to change one part of it and guards himself against witnessing the wickedness, he has to go out and change the other part of the evil which he can manage. Because if he goes out with the intention [*niat*] of changing what he can, then will come to no harm if witness what he cannot change. Otherwise, he will be staying away from the wickedness without any valid excuse.

Begin the Call to Allah with Oneself

Every Muslim has to start putting himself to rights. So he should begin by dedicating himself to the religious obligations and avoidance of what has been forbidden. Then he should teach members of his household, and when time permits he should approach his neighbours, then the people of his neighbourhood, after that the people of his town, after that the people of the surrounding suburbs, after those rural people, the Kurds, Bedouins and others, and so on until he reaches the farthest end of the world. If the one who is close to the area fulfils this obligation, the rest are thereby absolved; otherwise, the responsibility rests on everyone capable of whether living far or close to the given area.

The obligation persists so long as there remains on the face of the earth a man who does not know one single obligation of his religion and he is capable of learning it or approaching someone who can instruct him on that obligation, and this is particularly true for someone so anxious about his belief that time is no longer squandered in acquiring rare subcategories of knowledge [*ilm*] which by their very nature belong to the corpus of collective obligations. This obligation is paramount, yet comes second after a more important individual or collective obligation.

Wassalam.

* * *

Thus concludes the introduction, and we shall now discuss the eight categories that were mentioned, thus turning to Allah, the Exalted for help and putting our trust in Him.

Imam Abdullah al-Haddad

Hawi Tarim Hadhramaut.



Chapter One

The First Category

دَعْوَةُ الْعُلَمَاءِ بِالذِّينِ

A Call to the Devout Learned Man

The first group is the devout learned [*ulama*] man of the religion. They represent the leaders to the public. They are as integral as salt is to food. For this reason, it has been said,

يَا مَعْشَرَ الْقُرَّاءِ يَا مِلْحَ الْبَلَدِ مَا بُصِّلِحُ الْمِلْحَ إِذَا الْمِلْحُ فُسِدَ

“O reciters [*Qurraa*], O salt of the town. Salt is no good when tasteless.”

The reciters are learned [*ulama*]. The word reciters or readers [*qurraa*] was used to describing them in past times. The carriers of the Qur'an were the learned men of Allah's religion, informed about His commandments and interdiction, admonition and such matters of caution. For this reason, there were only a few who had compiled the Quran among the many thousands of companions of the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace upon his death. Four or seven have been said to do so. He who knew Surah al-Baqarah and Surah *ala Imran* by heart were counted among their learned and jurisprudent. According to a hadith,

مَنْ اسْتَظْهَرَ الْقُرْآنَ فَقَدْ أَدْرَجَتْ النَّبُوءَ بَيْنَ جَنْبَيْهِ غَيْرُ أَنَّهُ لَا يُوحَى إِلَيْهِ.

“Whosoever knows the Quran by heart has folded Prophethood within his blossom, except that he has received no revelations.”

It means to memorise the Quran and recite without looking at it.

The Quran is an exalted revelation from the Exalted Lord to an immensely Noble Messenger. In it, Allah has assembled the knowledge of the first and the last, the foremost and successors. As he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said,

فِيهِ نَبَأٌ مِّن قَبْلِكُمْ، وَنَبَأٌ مِّن بَعْدِكُمْ، وَحُكْمٌ مَّا بَيْنَكُم، مَّن قَالَ بِهِ صَدَقَ، وَمَن حَكَمَ بِهِ عَدَلَ، وَمَن التَّمَسَّ الْهُدَىٰ مِن غَيْرِهِ أَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ.

“In it (the Quran) are tidings of the people before you, it furnishes judgment on matters between you. Whosoever evokes it, speaks the truth. Who judges it, judges, justly, and whosoever seeks guidance from a source other than it (the Quran), Allah will lead him astray.”

Yet matters have come to such a point as one would recite the Qur'an from Surah al-Fatiha to the end and yet does not know what it is, to whom it is revealed and why it has been revealed. Furthermore, it does not bother him that he is both unaware and ignorant. And he has no impetus in him that will push him to seek such knowledge so that he possesses it. His distraction is so extreme, and his attention is diverted away from understanding the Book of his Lord. He is so absorbed in the life on this earth, thus captured by its appetites and deluded by its adornments. Who can be further astray than one who fits this description? أُولَٰئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلَّ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ.

“They are like cattle, nay more misguided: for they are heedless (of warning).”¹

Now it should be clear to you that the Glorious Qur'an is the original source of knowledge, authentic in its place of assembly.

Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, said to His Messenger upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace,

وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ.

“And We have sent down to you the Book explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy and Glad Tidings to Muslims.”²

¹ Surah 7 al-Araf ending of Verse 179

² Surah 16 an-Nahl Verse 89

And says the Exalted,

“Nothing have We omitted from the Book.”¹ مَا فَرَطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ.

Should you see a man reciting the Quran improperly, or he does not ponder over its meanings, or he is inattention in his recitation, then there is no doubt that he is heedless (and unmindful), makes mistakes (in his recitation) and is screened away from the verses of Allah. Allah's wrath and displeasure have overtaken him and Allah has sealed his heart off as the Exalted says,

“Do they not then earnestly seek to understand the Quran, or are their hearts locked up by them?”²

One should not be taken in by his reciting the Quran.

There is a hadith saying:

“Verily, most hypocrites of this people are its reciters.”

His recitation is of no avail to him. The Quran will, in these circumstances, become Allah's witness and argument against him as he, upon whom be blessings and peace, said,

“And the Qur'an is either an argument for or against you.”

In another hadith it was recorded that,

مَنْ جَعَلَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمَامَهُ قَادَهُ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ. وَمَنْ جَعَلَهُ خَلْفَ ظَهْرِهِ سَاقَهُ إِلَى النَّارِ.

“Whosoever appoints the Quran as his guide, and it will guide him to Paradise. And whosoever keeps it behind him. It will steer him to Hell.”

It has thus become clear that whosoever takes the Quran as his inspiration for faith, as a source of knowledge [*ilm*] and a spur to action prospers and gains felicity both in this world and the Hereafter.

In contrast, he who neglects it and acts in breach of its interdictions fails and loses, and strays away from the path of righteousness and links hands with those who, on being admonished with

¹ Surah 6 anAn'am Verse 38

² Surah 47 Muhammad Verse 24

verses of Allah, disregard them, also with those who reject Allah's signs, and turn away from them as the Exalted says,

سَنَجْزِي الَّذِينَ يَصْدِفُونَ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْدِفُونَ.

“In good time shall We requite those who turn away from Our Signs, with a dreadful penalty, for their turning away.”¹

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْفَعُ بِهَذَا الْقُرْآنِ أَقْوَامًا وَيَضَعُ بِهِ الْآخَرِينَ.

“Verily Allah raises some group of people with this Qur'an and lower others.”

Understand the meaning of al-Quran while reciting it

Do make an effort, dear reader, to be among those who Allah raises with the Quran, and this requires that one should read Qur'an as it should be recited, that is, recite it meditatively, and see whether you know what it means and apply its messages in life. If it is a verse of command, then examine yourself and see if you are fulfilling that particular command. If there be a verse of prohibition, then see if you are keeping well away from that specific prohibition. Should you come across a verse whose meaning you do not know, go and ask! In this way, you will become one of those who recite the Book of Allah in a manner of which He approves, if Allah, the Lofty, so wish.

And do not recite the Qur'an in a state of unawareness, that is, someone who chatter with the Qur'an as if reading a poem, eventually joining the crowd of those who regret, and in the Hereafter become among the losers.

If you are among those who have learnt it by heart and can recite it, but you are nevertheless not counted among the learned [*ulama*] of religion, then your memorisation and recitation fall short of quality. Your reading is but an image, and that will be held as an argument against you.

Reciters are, but the learned [*ulama*] as long as they recite the Quran as they have been duly commanded, and recite as earlier described.

¹ Surah 6 Al-An'am Verse 157

Verily Allah is the Guide of righteousness. وَاللّٰهُ الْهَادِي إِلَى الصَّوَابِ.

Quite a good deal has been said about the ‘people of Quran’, and they were indeed the learned [*ulama*] when they combined Quranic knowledge and practice in the past until the time when people were not counted among men of knowledge [*ilm*], nor are they described as such. Notice, may Allah mercy be upon you, the vast difference between the earlier learned [*ulama*] and the later ones in this aspect.

The latter has fallen prey to illusions and seduction; neglect and heedlessness have dominated them. They have neglected to act according to their knowledge, and the ‘knowledge’ hangs on their tongues but is not lodged in their hearts; it is in their words but not in their deeds, thus becoming Allah’s argument against them.

Just as he, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said:
الْعِلْمُ عِلْمَانِ: عِلْمٌ فِي الْقَلْبِ فَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْعِلْمُ النَّفْعُ. وَعِلْمٌ عَلَى اللِّسَانِ وَذَلِكَ حُجَّةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى ابْنِ آدَمَ.

“There are two kinds of knowledge [*ilm*]. A knowledge lodged in the heart is beneficent knowledge and knowledge (resting) on the tongue is Allah’s argument against (sons of Adam) men.”

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, also supplication,
اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ عِلْمًا نَافِعًا.

“O Allah, may You grant me beneficent knowledge.”

And he, upon whom be blessings and peace, actually seeks to be protected from useless knowledge, and a heart that lacks in humility.

Beneficent Knowledge and Useless Knowledge

Thus, knowledge [*ilm*] comes under two categories, beneficent and useless. A similar distinction can be made concerning people of knowledge, those who share the benefit of their knowledge with others and offer such benefit and those who do not. Now, knowledge may belong to the category of beneficent knowledge, and yet people do not get any benefit from their possessors, and this is the case when the man

who possesses such knowledge acts contrary to what he knows. Such a man becomes like a foul vessel that fouls up whatever is put into it.

Indeed some learned, may Allah show them mercy, have said,
“An increment of knowledge to a wicked man

Is like surplus water to the *Colocynth*¹
The more water it absorbs, the more bitter the root.

The less water there is, the less bitter it is”

Thus the wicked learned man becomes such that the less knowledge he acquires, the less his influence of seduction, corruption and harm. This is not impossible, as the sons of Adam’s natural behaviour and various mannerism resemble trees and soils. While there are multiple trees and types of soils which thrive and prosper by just coming into contact with water, there are others which are like the bitter trees and thorny ones and like marshland and abandoned open lands which acquire bitterness and saltiness and bear thorny vegetation.

Among the wonders of nature that are often recalled is that of the spring rain falls in an environment where there are pearls and oysters. Shells open up their lips and close them, turning rain into pearls by the will of Allah. Serpents, on the other hand, graze their mouths and it becomes deadly venom, although it is the same rain falling at the same time. The result varies in extreme in according to its placement and recipient that receive the rain. It also resembles a sword that strives in the cause of Allah which achieve its objectives and when it left the right path to perform sins.

It is no wonder to find that, to a wicked man, knowledge is plainly harmful or just of no use.

Thus it is not impossible to agree that knowledge is but an object and an instrument, a cause of betterment and benefit, should it falls into the hands of the virtuous, kind people; however, it is a cause of contrary ends, if it falls into the hands of wicked, evil people.

¹ Colocynth is a Mediterranean and African herbaceous vine (*Citrullus colocynthis*) bearing a round, yellow or green fruit with a bitter pulp use in medicinal herbs.

Furthermore, knowledge commanded by the wicked learned man is not a genuine knowledge of religion. It is but its image and from resting on his tongue and his external crops not in his heart, while there exists nothing of knowledge inside him.

Al-Imam Malik, may Allah shower blessings upon him, says, “Knowledge is not measured by the number of hadith one relates; verily knowledge is a light which Allah, the Exalted, puts into the heart.”

‘Ibn Masu’d, may Allah be pleased with him, put it in a similar vein when he says: “Knowledge is to be in awe of Allah.”

Some sayings highlight that “Knowledge call for Action, if it responds, it stays; otherwise, it vacates.” In other words, all its essence, soul, light and blessings vacate, and only its form and image remain, eventually establishing the argument against the possessor.

Imam Shafi’i, may Allah’s mercy be upon him, has composed the following verse:

شَكُوتٌ إِلَى وَكَيْعٍ سُوءَ حِفْظِي فَأَرْشَدَنِي إِلَى تَرْكِ الْمَعَاصِي
وَأَخْبَرَنِي بِأَنَّ الْعِلْمَ نُورٌ وَنُورُ اللَّهِ لَا يُهْدَى لِعَاصِي

I complained to Waki’ about how patchy my memory is

He advised me always to give up sinning (first),

He said to me that knowledge is but light (placed on the heart)

And the Light of Allah will not shine upon the sinners.

He (Imam Shafi’i) referred to the soul and essence of knowledge just as we have discussed and explained earlier.

Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said: “My worst fear upon you, (or as he said) upon this community is an unchaste man possessed of a learned tongue”.

Ali, may Allah honour him, said: “Two persons can break my back: a dishonourable learned and an ignorant devotee, one drives people away by his dishonour, and the other seduces them by his devotions.”

Knowledge of an *Alim* who fear Allah will bring benefits

It has thus become clear that the Allah-fearing, Allah-loving learned man is wholly good, benevolent and righteous to himself as well as to Muslims, and a learned man who neither fears nor loves Allah nor holds Him in awe is evil himself, an affliction and trial both upon himself as well as upon Muslims.

Indeed, parables have been made about the wicked learned man [*‘ulama’ussu*] as reported by `Isa bin Maryam peace be upon him,

Firstly: “They are like sewage pipes which lead into the cesspool: gypsum white on the outside, but otherwise teeming with refuse and filth on the inside.”

Secondly: “They are like the sepulchres inviting from the outside, but full of dead bones inside.”

Thirdly: “They are like a dark house on top of which is a candle. There is light outside but darkness inside.”

More severe than this is what Allah, the Exalted said in His Noble Book about the unchaste learned man comparing them to the lowliest of animals, namely the donkey and the dog, whereby He says:

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِّلُوا التَّوْرَةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ أَسْفَارًا.

“The similitude of those who were charged with the (obligations of the) Mosaic Law, but who subsequently failed in those (obligations), is that of a donkey which carries huge tomes (but understands them not).”¹

And says the Exalted,

وَأَنذِرْ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي آتَيْنَاهُ آيَاتِنَا فَانسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَأَتْبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْعَاوِينَ. وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا، وَلَكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ. فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ، إِنْ تَحْمِلَ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثْ أَوْ تَتْرَكْهُ يَلْهَثْ.

“Relate to them the story of the man to whom We sent Our Signs, but he passed them by: so Satan followed him and led him astray. If it had been

¹ Surah 62 al-Jumuah Verse 5

Our Will, We should have elevated him with Our Signs; but he inclined to the earth, and followed his vain desires. His similitude is that of a dog: if you attack him, he lolls out his tongue, or if you leave him alone, he still lolls out his tongue.”¹

Verily, there is no doubt that animals and beasts are much better off than those who have cast away the Book of Allah, neglected His commandment, and treated His obligation lightly. After all creatures and animals die, turn into earth while he (who was given knowledge but ignored it) is destined for Hell and punishment and damnation. The Messenger, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said,

أَشَدُّ النَّاسِ عَذَابًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَالِمٌ لَمْ يَنْفَعَهُ اللَّهُ بِعِلْمِهِ.

“One to suffer the most severe of punishments on the Day of Judgment is a learned man, whom Allah has not made him profited by his knowledge.”²

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, also said,

مَنْ زَادَ عَمَلًا وَلَمْ يَزِدْ هُدًى لَمْ يَزِدْ مِنَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا بَعْدًا.

“Who gains in knowledge, but does not gain righteousness gains only to distance (himself) from Allah.”³

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said:

يُؤْمَرُ بِالْعَالِمِ إِلَى النَّارِ فَتَنْدَلِقُ أَقْتَابُ بَطْنِهِ فَيَدُورُ بِهَا فِي النَّارِ كَمَا يَدُورُ الْحِمَارُ بِالرَّحَى.

“The learned man will be dragged into Hell until his bowels (or intestines) will gush out, and he will be made to carry them around and all-over Hell like a donkey doing the millstone round.”

Different Categories and Types of Knowledge

Now, be informed that knowledge covers various subjects and numerous types. The pious, learned men are also of different types and different ranks.

¹ Surah 7 al-Araf Verse 175-176

² Narrated by Thabarani in the smaller collection; Ibn ‘Adi and Baihaqi

³ Narrated by al-Dailami in the smaller collection.

As far as the sciences of religion are concerned, it is obligatory on the part of whosoever knows them or seeks to learn them to teach others must do so for the sake of Allah and reward in the Next World. There is a significant obligation to put such knowledge into practice, to spread it and to invite people to it for the sake of Allah and the reward in the Hereafter. Verily Allah has promised whosoever accomplishes this that he will be rewarded with His pleasure and abundant reward. He has duly warned whosoever fails to do so and is lax in it that he will learn His displeasure and painful punishment.

Some sciences, by their very nature, are not religious, nor are they part of the *Shari'ah*. Such sciences include knowledge of languages, mathematics and medicine. It is permissible to study these sciences and to teach for the sake of allowable worldly affairs. Moreover, if one pursues them to achieve religious purposes, that is, to help further ground the aims of religion, then there is an abundant reward because of the noble end, these actions lead.

Categories of the Learned [*Ulama*]

As for the learned, the one with the highest merit, most elevated position before Allah, are those who study the knowledge and put it into practice exclusively for the sake of Allah and the Hereafter, without any other ulterior motive. Such those who are prosperous; who have attained the pleasures of Allah and the Assembly if the intimate the Abode which He has ennobled.

Indeed, they walk in the footsteps of His prophets, messengers and their heirs, may peace be upon them.

It is about them that he, upon whom be blessings and peace, said,
عُلَمَاءُ وَرَثَةُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ.

“The pious, learned men [*ulama*] are heirs of the prophets.”

There are people of knowledge who seek knowledge and teach it, yet for such earthly bound intentions as prestige, wealth, a place in people's hearts and other transient ends. A man so afflicted may, however, be aware in his heart of his unfortunate state, his vile aspiration and ignoble shortfall. Such a man's destiny is at risk.

Nevertheless, there is some hope that he may repent, wake up from his heedlessness and his wicked intent.

There are some people of knowledge whose intention and goal is rivalry, to show-off and debate, to acquire authority and rank among the relevant people. Coupled with these are other unworthy motives. Despite all these, such a man privately feels quite satisfied with his lot and conceives himself as being in a superior position and high rank before Allah, and this is because he stands and hides behind the mannerisms and mores (moral principles) of the learned.

Such a learned is in the most-evil state, the lowest of ranks and comes perilously close to the word of the Exalted

قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا. الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا.

Say: “Shall we tell you of those who lose most in respect of their deeds?” Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life. While they thought that they were acquiring good by their works?”¹

In this concern, Hujjatul-Islam (Imam Ghazali) may Allah be pleased with him, commented that such a man is amongst the damned and deluded stupid since there is no hope that he will repent because he is convinced that he is among the virtuous. He is referred to by the Messenger, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

أَنَا مِنْ غَيْرِ الدَّجَالِ أَخْفُ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الدَّجَالِ. قِيلَ: فَمَا هُوَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟
قَالَ: عُلَمَاءُ الشُّوءِ.

“I am even more afraid for you of the non-Dajjal than of the Dajjal himself.” Then (someone) asked him, “Who is it, O Prophet of Allah?” He answered, “The wicked learned.”

The Messenger, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said:
مَنْ طَلَبَ عِلْمًا مِمَّا يَبْتَغَى بِهِ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ لَا يَطْلُبُهُ إِلَّا عَرَضًا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا، لَمْ يَجِدْ عَرْفَ
الْجَنَّةِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

¹ Surah alKahf Verse 103-104.

“Whosoever seeks knowledge which can be employed to serve Allah, but he seeks it for worldly gains will not find the aroma of Paradise on his final day.”

In another Hadith, it was narrated that, “one catches the aroma of Paradise within a distance of five hundred years.”

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said,

مَنْ طَلَبَ الْعِلْمَ لِيُجَادِلَ بِهِ الْعُلَمَاءَ وَيُمَارِيَ بِهِ السُّفَهَاءَ، وَيَصْرِفَ بِهِ وُجُوهَ النَّاسِ إِلَيْهِ،
أَدْخَلَ اللَّهُ النَّارَ.

“Whosoever seeks knowledge so that he may debate with the learned, dispute with the scatterbrained and rivet people’s attention to himself, Allah will put such a person into Hellfire.”

Historical Records

Some historical records related that a man befriended Musa (Moses), peace be upon him and attached himself to him until he acquired knowledge from Musa, peace be upon him. Whenever he related these sciences, the man would start with saying, “Musa, to whom Allah spoke, narrated to us such and such. Musa, the elect of Allah told us such and such.”

He went on doing this until he became rich, and his wealth grew. And Musa, peace be upon him, missed him. He inquired about him and got no news, until one day a man came with a pig who had a black rope around its neck. Musa asked him if he had seen him. He said: “Yes, he is this pig.” Musa, upon whom be peace, then supplicated to Allah that he may restore him to his original state so that he (Musa) might ask him about his plight. Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, told him via revelations, (Musa), “Were you to supplicate to me with names that Adam and his successors supplicated to me, I shall not restore him to his original form but will tell you the reason why I have treated him in this manner. He used to trade religion for mundane wares.”

More severe than this (report) is a record narrated by Mu’adh bin Jabel, may Allah be pleased with him, in a hadith technically classified

as Non-Qualification [*Mauquf*] and [*Marfuk*] that said that the Messenger, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said,

مَنْ فِتْنَةُ الْعَالَمِ أَنْ يَكُونَ الْكَلَامَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنَ الْأَسْتِمَاعِ.

“The trial that (consistently) befall a learned is that he should love speech more than listening.”

In a speech, there are possibilities of embellishment and exaggeration, and in any event, a speaker is liable to error. While in silence, there is peace and knowledge. That was the record till the end.

There are also dire warnings which we have omitted for the sake of brevity. It mentions of the levels of Hell, each with its class of wicked learned men and their descriptions. These are related in the Book of Knowledge in “*Ihya` Ulumiddin*”.

Set out with Virtuous Intentions

Now the cardinal principle upon which the seeker of knowledge needs to organise his affairs is to have a virtuous intention right from the very beginning of his quest.

That is, he should seek knowledge for the sake of Allah and the Hereafter because the intention is the foundation upon which things are built. If it is sound and stable, the building would also be so. The seekers of knowledge should give this matter his most eager attention. Verily, he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace said:

“Indeed, actions are judged by intentions.” إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ.

In the opening of his book “*Bidayatul-Hidayah*”, al-Imam al-Ghazali, may Allah be pleased with him, set out a general caution which drew the attention of knowledge seekers to the issue of wholesome and unwholesome intentions, that is the proper and the improper ones. He said that “after the preceding, know that those of you who are eager to acquire knowledge, and who shows a sincere desire and thirst for it, should know that if the purpose of your quest for knowledge is {till he said} and the denizens of the sea (fishes) seek forgiveness for you when you are busy (fishing).”

The Praiseworthy *`Alim* and other ranks

Verily, it is known that a distinguished learned man [*`Alim*], who enjoys a praiseworthy standing and a lofty status before his Lord, and successful position in the Hereafter, is an *'Alim* who practices what he knows, who spreads the knowledge [*ilm*] and invites people to it, thereby seeking Allah's pleasure and such rewards as Allah has promised in the Hereafter.

After this class of learned comes the learned who lives up to his knowledge but does not set out to teach others. If it is miserliness which stops him from teaching others and drives him to conceal his knowledge from deserving people, he is thereby committing a wrong and is worthy of blame before Allah and His Messenger.

He is not to blame, however, if the reason be that he is preoccupied with himself and deeply engaged with his religious commitments and preparations for his life in the Hereafter; and people do not need him to teach because others teach the knowledge and to spread it among the people a whole group of virtuous predecessors has adopted this course and blessed successors among the learned men of religion and righteous servants of Allah, especially in the areas of applied law and legal verdicts. An account of this class will be given later.

The Lazy Learned [*`Alim*] Man

Following this learned is another who never strains himself to put into practice what he knows, that is, teaches people and spreads the knowledge. He fails to live according to his knowledge because of either laziness and procrastination or finding practising difficult because of self-centred deductions, whereas he considers teaching easy because of the fame it brings about. Such knowledge has been likened to a needle which clothes people while it is naked, and to a candle which burns itself away so that others may walk in the light, and to a grindstone that sharpens others but itself remains blunt. A learned in this condition falls under the general scope of Allah's words,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ. كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ.

“O you who believe! Why say you that which you do not? Grievously odious is it in the sight of Allah that you say that which you do not.”¹

The Exalted also says,

أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَنَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ.

“Do ye enjoin right conduct on the people and forget to practice it yourselves, and yet he study the Scripture? Will ye not understand?”²

The Messenger, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said,

يُؤْمَرُ بِالْعَالِمِ إِلَى النَّارِ فَتَنْدَلِقُ أَفْتَابُ بَطْنِهِ فَيَدُورُ بِهَا فِي النَّارِ كَمَا يَدُورُ الْحِمَارُ بِالرَّحَى فَيُطِيفُ بِهِ أَهْلُ النَّارِ فَيَقُولُونَ: مَا بَالُكَ؟ فَيَقُولُ: كُنْتُ أَمُرُ بِالْخَيْرِ وَلَا آتِيهِ، وَأَنْهَى عَنِ الشَّرِّ وَآتِيهِ.

“The learned man will be dragged into Hell until his bowels (or intestines) will gush out, and he will be made to carry them around and around all-over Hell like a donkey doing the millstone round, and the people of the Hell-Fire will ask, “What is the matter?” And he will say, “I used to order righteous conduct but would not abide by it myself and prohibit evil but dedicate myself to it.””

He, upon whom be blessings and peace, said:

تَعَلَّمُوا مَا شِئْتُمْ، فَوَا اللَّهَ لَا يُقْبَلُ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ حَتَّى تَعْمَلُوا بِهِ.

“Learn whatsoever you wish, in the name of Allah, it ill not be accepted from you until you put it to practice.”

No benefit in having knowledge if it is not practice

Following this learned man is another who knows, but neither practices what he knows nor teaches it either because he is lazy and finds it difficult or because he is involved with worldly affairs and its vanities. Such a learned man is likened to a rock at the river source. It neither absorbs the water itself nor does it allow water to pass through so that people may drink and profit it. Now all penalties which have been set in respect of a learned man who does not practice what he knows, apply to this category

¹ Surah 61 as-Saff Verses 2-3

² Surah 2 Al-Baqarah Verse 44

of learned man as well. It follows that he will face additional penalties that apply to men who do not teach Allah's servants and conceal such knowledge. He, Transcendent and Glorious is He, says,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنزَلْنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالْهُدَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّاهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْكِتَابِ أَُولَٰئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّاعِنُونَ.

“Those who conceal the clear Signs We have sent down, and the Guidance, after we have made it clear for the People in the Book, on them shall be Allah's curse, and the curse of those entitled to cursed.”¹

The Learned who do not practice nor teaches

Worse than this is the learned man who does not practice what he learns but goes on to invite people to wickedness and astray from the right path, promote vice in the guise of virtue and represents falsehood as the truth. He does so either to ingratiate himself with wrong-doers and the ignorant. Thereby gaining rank, prestige among them, and some of their wealth and otherworldly wares, or he does that out of willful disobedience against Allah and His Messenger, and to spread mischief and corruption on the land.

Such learned men are among the devil's allies and deputies of the accursed, lying Dajjal. Such learned men are in the worst state, and their loss is tremendous; they are burdened with their sins plus the sins of those they have led astray and invited to wickedness. As he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said,

مَنْ دَعَا إِلَى ضَلَالَةٍ كَانَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْإِثْمِ مِثْلُ آثَامِ مَنْ اتَّبَعَهُ مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ يُنْقِصَ مِنْ آثَامِهِمْ شَيْءٌ.

“Whosoever invites to wickedness, he shall earn his sins, and the sins of whosoever follows him, without any reduction in the sins of those who followed him.”

This evil learned man may well die yet his sins remain. He will then be punished because of them in his grave. Then following his death, the sins of his followers will overtake him, and he will suffer on their

¹ Surah 2 al-Baqarah Verse 159

account for a very long time. Blessed is he, therefore, who dies with his sins, as some righteous learned men of authority have said.

As for the wicked learned men, and with the assumption that they would wake from their slumber and aspire to repent to their Lord from their sins, repentance may perhaps be difficult as evidenced from past stories that came to our knowledge; “there was one of the learned men of Bani Israel who used to call people to evil, regretted his works, and resolved to repent from his waywardness. He, therefore, approached a prophet of his time and informed him of his condition to repent, so that the prophet would intercede on his behalf and asked His Lord to accept his repentance. Allah then spoke to that prophet, peace be upon him, via a revelation and said, “if his sins were between Me and him I would forgive him. Now, what about My servants whom he led astray and caused them to get into hell, that is by following his wickedness.”

It has also been reported that Allah, the Exalted, says in a revelation to David [*Daud*], upon whom be peace,

“O David, do not ask about Me from a learned man dead drunk from the love of the world lest he obstructs you from My path. Such learned men are highway robbers who obstruct My servants.”

Some Beneficial Historical Records

It has been said that the sarcophagus (casket) complained to Allah because of the stench (oozing) out of dead bodies of unbelievers and they were told the stomachs of the wicked learned men are even worse.

One of the virtuous righteous predecessors said that one might look at a Sultan’s officer and invoke Allah’s protection against people like him, whereas the wicked learned man’s condition is much worse than this people.

In his description of wicked learned men, *Amir al-Mukminin* Ali, may Allah honour him said, “They are the arrogant ones, the enemies of the Most Merciful. Indeed, they have come to such a ruinous pass because having inverted the matter, and they became inverted. One of them had a chance to become a caller and guide to the path of the Most Merciful but

instead went himself astray and led others astray, calling and inviting people to the Path of the Devil.”

You must have heard what Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, said about Bal`am bin Ba`urak, when He says,

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي آتَيْنَاهُ آيَاتِنَا فَانْسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَأَتْبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ. وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ. فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ إِنْ تَحْمِلَ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثْ أَوْ تَتْرَكْهُ يَلْهَثْ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَافْضُصْ الْقِصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ.

“Relate to them the story of the man to whom We sent Our Signs, but he passed them by: so Satan followed him up, and he went astray. If it had been Our Will, We should have elevated him with Our Signs; but he inclined to the earth, and followed his vain desires. His similitude is that of a dog: if you attack him, he lolls out his tongue, or if you leave him alone, he (still) lolls out his tongue. That is the similitude of those who reject Our Signs; so relate the story; perchance they may reflect.”¹

Likewise, that will be the destiny of a learned man who seeks knowledge for the Here and Now, follows perverse passion and leads people astray by guiding falsehood and adorning sin.

The Religious Learned Man

It is typical of the learned men of religion to be the ultimate refuge and resort for the ordinary Muslims when things tangle and confuse them. When they resort to the learned men, they should find resolutions of their doubts and clarifications, which set them free from predicaments. The learned men do this under evident signs Allah has bestowed upon them and the knowledge of manifest practices [*sunnah*] he has given them. However, many of those falsely associated with knowledge now has become an affliction, a trial, and a source of confusion. When ordinary Muslims resort to them, they lead them astray, seduce them away from Allah’s ordained truth and path, and open the door of deception and fraud, which in turn lead them to do away with other people’s right and eat other people’s property for vanity. Verily, Allah is the one to be asked for help,

¹ Surah 7 al-Araf Verses 175-176

and there is neither strength nor power except in Allah the Exalted and the Magnificent. Something similar has overtaken the learned men of Bani Israel as Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, relates. Allah punished them by planting disaffection amongst them and made them an example and a lesson for people who came after them.

There are many hadith that indicate that people who have gone astray in this community follow them in error (referring to the Bani Israel). Said the *Rasulullah*, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, لَتَتَّبِعَنَّ سُنَنَ مَنْ قَبْلَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَوْ دَخَلُوا جُحَرَ ضَبٍّ لَدَخَلْتُمْ مِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ. قَالَوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ! الْيَهُودُ وَالنَّصَارَى؟ قَالَ: فَمَنْ؟!

“Verily, you will follow the ways of those before you to the point that if they did enter a lizard's hole, you would enter behind them.” They said: “O Messenger of Allah, Jews and Christians?” and he said: “Who else?!”

According to another version, he said: “To the point that if one of them happened to be sexually intimate with his mother, there might be those of you who would do the same.”

Such trickery and deception did happen among Bani Israel. For example, through guile, the people of the village made it legal to fish on Sabbath day. Another example is that of the owner of the stick who put with it a precious stone given to him for safekeeping. But such deceptions were of little avail, for soon enough Allah's wrath and displeasure overtook them.

Ulama must not show leeway to Religious Law

Now if it is the learned man who opens doors wide for ordinary Muslims to legitimatise what Allah disallow. What will be the state of such a learned man before Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He. Let him be ready for Allah's penalty and wrath which are sure to overtake him.

The duty of a pious, learned man, when approached by ordinary Muslims for guidance, is to guide them to their salvation and felicity in the Hereafter. He should explain to them the way to gain preemptive piety, open the doors of caution in religion, and warn them against

gobbling up other people's property and against plunging into what Allah forbids as well as avoiding what is dubious and what is mixed up. In this way, he will be counted as one of the learned men of religion and guides of Muslims.

But to give them leeway in areas where Allah has forbidden, represent falsehood under the colour of truth, seduce them into the doubtful are certainly not the task of the learned men of religion who hold Allah in awe and fear and who counsel themselves as well as their brothers to uphold Allah's command and avoid His prohibitions. Instead, it is the call of Satan and misleading Imams who are inviting people to hell and who will get no protection on the Last Day.

According to hadith attributed to Hudhayfa, may Allah be pleased with him when he asked the Messenger, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, "Indeed, when we were in ignorant times and Allah brought us this good (Islam). Is there evil after this good?"

He reported the hadith in full up to the point where the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said, "Yes what you said is correct, the callers are standing at the gates of hell, and whosoever answers them, they will cast him right into it (hell)."

According to some sayings of the Companions; "a calamity will befall a people, and they will run to their learned men only to find that they have been cursed and transformed into apes and swine."¹ A learned man [*`Alim*] whose knowledge [*ilm*] is an affliction upon himself and Muslims, a trial and a source of error is not a learned man [*`Alim*] but a rebellious Satan and an outlaw to Allah and His Messenger.

Allah, the Exalted says,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحَادُّونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ فِي الْأَذَلِّينَ. كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لِيَغْلِبَ أَنا وَرُسُلِي، إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ.

¹ According to some of the Righteous Learned Men [*Muhaqqiqin*], the transformation means transformation of their inner core, and they have been transformed ages ago.

“Those who resist Allah and His Messenger will be among those most humiliated. Allah has decreed: “It is I and My Messengers who must prevail:” for Allah is One full of strength, able to enforce His Will.”¹

The General Public needs Pious Learned Men that teaches them religious obligations

As another point to note, ordinary people need someone who will improve their spiritual lives, give them guidance and warning, caution them about Allah, and remind them of His reward for good deeds and His penalties for evil ones because generally speaking such people are distracted from Allah and the Hereafter and inclined to this world and its diversions, delights and transient vanities. Now if the so-called learned man [*Alim*] seduces them to error, gives them license in strict areas of Allah’s ordinance by teaching them about making false claims, false testimonies, and field tricks of usury [*riba*], all of which both he and they know are not meant for the seeker of Allah and His reward.

When someone approaches him to draft a void will, this learned man would say: “a will in favour of an heir is not permissible. Write it instead as a vow or as rectification [*iqrar*].”

Or if someone came to him who wants to give his wealth to some of his heirs and deny the rest and he says: “Do it via rectification [*iqrar*] and a vow so that it enjoys a legitimate face.” He also steers them to other abhorrent matters and acts of perverse fraud and deceit.

These so-called learned men fit the description of imams of error and fraud, callers to Hell and damnation, whom Allah has made a disgrace, an affliction and a trial upon themselves as well as those who swallow their gilded lies and follow them in their error.

وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ.

“And soon will the unjust assailants know what vicissitudes their affairs will take.”²

¹ Surah 58 al-Mujadala Verses 20-21

² Surah 26 asShura Verse 227

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ غَافِلًا عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنَّمَا يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ تَشْخَصُ فِيهِ الْأَبْصَارُ

“Think not that Allah does not heed the deeds of those who do wrong. He but gives them respite against a Day when the eyes will fixedly stare in horror.”¹

The Allah-Fearing Learned

In their dealings with ordinary Muslims, the Allah-fearing learned man did not use to give them concessions, nor would they tell them of the differences between scholars in areas which seemingly count as concessions, nor would they tell them. Instead, they used to counsel towards caution in religion and urging people to avoid the dubious, mixed-up affairs. The rationale being that ordinary Muslims complain that ordinances are strictly enforced upon them. Therefore, they tend to look for concessions because most of the time, they are heedless of Allah; they are under the dominion of their passions and worldly vanities. Once a learned man tells them of the allowances made in a given area, they would overact them, and they may plunge into the forbidden because most of them are like animals. It is mentioned in a hadith, that, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace said,

مَنْ وَقَعَ فِي الشُّبُهَاتِ وَقَعَ فِي الْحَرَامِ كَالرَّاعِي حَوْلَ الْحِمَى يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَقَعَ فِيهِ

“Who gets into the dubious will surely get into the forbidden in the same way that a shepherd tending his flock on the edge of the sanctuary may get into it.”

Correct and Rightful Fatwa

It has been reported that one of the kings of Morocco had intercourse during the daytime in the month of Ramadan. He assembled the learned men at his palace and asked them about the position of the Law on the issue. A member of the assembled group, and who was distinctive in knowledge told him: “You will have to fast two successive months.”

When they left, the colleagues of the learned man told him excitedly,

¹ Surah 14 Ibrahim Verse 42

“Why do you give him a legal opinion requiring him to fast two successive months when you know that the school of Imam Malik allows for a choice in expiation of intercourse during in the day in Ramadan.”

The choices set are: setting a slave free, fasting and feeding the needy. He said, “Had I told him of emancipating a slave and giving food to the deserving needy, that would have been all too easy, and he would embark upon intercourse each day of the month of Ramadan. Fasting is hard for him, and more likely to restrain and discipline him.”

The True Righteous Ulama - Never Conceited

Imam Ahmad bin Musa bin Ujail, may Allah be pleased with him, used not to read the chapters of abandonment [*iyla`*], injurious assimilation of wife and mother [*Adh-Dhihar*] and condemnation [*Al-Lia'n*] in the presence of ordinary Muslims. He also used to direct a reader, upon reading these chapters, to skip them and read them later when people are gone, lest they should hear them and consequently enter into a critical situation and obstinacy.

Such was the conduct of the learned men of religion and their enormous compassion and sound policy when dealing with ordinary Muslims.

Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, told a man who wanted to ask him about something but was too embarrassed to mention. “A learned man is indeed like a father. What you disclose to your father, you should disclose to him.” He echoes what the Chief of all Advisers, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him when he said: “Verily, to you, I am but like a father.”

How the Prophet made a ruling [*fatwa*]

It used to be the habit of him, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace when approached by someone with a question that he would guide him towards the path of adoring and fearing Allah, the path of salvation from his penalty, the way of upholding his sanctities and of caution in His commandments and prohibitions.

Among such incidents is the story of an *Ansari* (people of Medina who assist and support of the Prophet) from who wanted to give a servant to one of his children. When he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, asked him, "Have you given all your children likewise?" He said, "No". He, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, ordered him to withdraw the servant. According to another version, the *Ansari* asked him, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, to bear witness to the gift. He, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, says: "This is an injustice, and I do not bear witness to injustice."

In another incident, when he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, saw the dates from Khaibar which was brought to him and observed that it was good. He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him thus asked, "Are all dates from Khaibar like this?" They said, "No, O Rasulullah, but we exchange one of these for two measures of the bad. He says, "That is usury [*riba*'] but sell two measures of the spoiled 'dates' for one Dirham and use this Dirham to buy one measure of the good dates" or as he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "he guided them to what is sound and lawful and forbade them against the unsound and the unlawful."

When Utba bin Al-Harth, may Allah be pleased with him, asked the Prophet, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, about a woman he married. Subsequently, a dark-coloured woman came to him and told him, "I have breastfed you as well as the woman you are married to." And he says, "O Messenger of Allah, she is a dark-skinned woman." He, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "Leave her (the woman you are married to) for she is no good for you."

Learned Man advises the people honestly

Such was the conduct of the learned men of religion who uphold what Allah and His Messenger command and forbid and invite Muslims to do the same.

They would point out to them the way leading to their salvation and prosperity, take them away from the dubious and tangled matters, from the contrived, carefree going attitude to religion and from all the too

easy but at the same time blameworthy concessions embraced by none other than every neglectful and casual believers who risk courting Allah's anger and endangering his ending.

The learned men of the Hereafter are people of certitude, and apprehension and asceticism. They have not ceased to caution people against the evil learned men, who have been ardently seduced by this world and whose traits are pinpointed to distinguish them from the learned men of the Hereafter, who invite people to dedicate themselves to Allah and His religion. *Al-Imam Hujjatul-Islam* (Ghazali) has adequately and thoroughly dealt with this matter in his Book of Knowledge in his "*Ihya Ulumiddin*".

Before al-Ghazali was Al-Imam Al-Harith bin Asad Al-Muhasibi¹ may Allah be pleased with him, who also dealt with this topic in a few of his books. Similarly, Al-Imam Abu Thalib Al-Makki² may Allah be pleased with him, in his book called "*Qutul-Qulub*"³.

Of course, there are many others among the virtuous predecessors and successors whose task was to caution the evil learned men and warn them in the name of Allah and to warn people against them and their trails. They also used to tell the people the difference between the two categories by presenting their characteristics and giving evidence. Al-Imam Al-Ghazali has devoted a whole section in his Book of Knowledge in which he mentions the signs of the Righteous Learned of the Hereafter.

¹ He is called Abu Abdullah among the Sufi community. He is well known as a leading learned in the outwards sciences [*zahir*], Science of Modulus [*Mu'amalat*] and Fundamental Principles [*Usul*]. He was a teacher to several learned of Baghdad. Originally from the southern city of Basrah, he lived and passed away in Baghdad 243 years after Hijrah.

² His name is Muhammad bin Ali bin Athiyah Al-Harisi, a well-known and recognized learned in Jurisprudence [*Figh*] and also a preacher [*Wa'azh*] during his time. He was originally from the mountains between Wasith and Baghdad. He passed away in Baghdad in 386 years after Hijrah.

³ "The Sustenance of Hearts," [*Qutul-Qulub*] is a systematic exploration of Sufism and the 'knowledge of hearts'

Al-Ghazali counted twelve signs, having enumerated the traits of the Righteous Learned of the Hereafter, which tell them apart from the Learned of the Here-and-Now.

Al-Ghazali stated: “These are the twelve characteristics, each of which represents the virtues of by-gone Righteous Learned one should either adopt those qualities or acknowledge he has fallen short of them, but beware of the following condition. That is to put a religious face to this world’s matters and fuse the addictions of the wicked to the dedications of the rightly-guided learned who are well informed about Allah’s obligations, eventually confusing oneself.

Beware of this for your ignorance and obstinacy will lead you to the assembly of the doomed who have despaired of Allah’s mercy. In Allah, we seek refuge from the deceit of Satan, which has brought about the ruin of many. We supplicate to Allah to appoint us among those who are not deceived by the life of this world, nor are fooled by the Deceiver.

Great Rewards for Students and Teachers

You know that there are excellent distinctive, sublime place and splendid reward for knowledge, its devotees, its teachers and its seekers who are engaged in it for the sake of Allah, the Most-High and also for the Hereafter. There are many verses of the Quran, hadiths and words of the companions to support this stance, too many to mention all. For instance, the Exalted, Transcendent and Glorious is He, says:

شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُوا الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ.
“There is no god but He: That is the witness of Allah, His angels, and those endued with knowledge, standing firm on justice. There is no god but He, the Exalted in power, the Wise.”¹

Says the Exalted:

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ.

¹ Surah 3 al-Imran Verse 18:

“Allah will raise to suitable ranks and degrees, those of you who believe and given Knowledge. And Allah is well-acquainted with all you do.”¹

The Exalted says:

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ.

“Say, are those equal: those who know and those who do not know, it is those who are endowed with understanding that receives admonition.”²

The Messenger, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said,
الْعُلَمَاءُ وَرَثَةُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ. إِنَّ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ لَمْ يُوْرَثُوا دِينَارًا وَلَا دِرْهَمًا، وَإِنَّمَا وَرَثُوا الْعِلْمَ، فَمَنْ أَخَذَهُ فَقَدْ أَخَذَ بِحِطِّ وَافِرٍ.

“The learned are heirs of the Prophets. Indeed, the prophets have left behind neither dinar nor dirham but a heritage of knowledge, who takes it, has taken an abundant portion thereof.”

And he, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said,
مَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا يُفَقِّهْهُ فِي الدِّينِ، وَلِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِمَادٌ، وَعِمَادُ هَذَا الدِّينِ الْفَقْهُ. وَلَفَقِيْهُ وَاحِدٌ أَشَدُّ عَلَى الشَّيْطَانِ مِنْ أَلْفِ عَابِدٍ.

“Whom Allah wishes good, He gives him an insight into religion, and everything has a pillar, and the pillar of this religion is insight, and verily one insightful man is more formidable to satan than a thousand devotees.”

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said:

طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيْضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ.

“The quest for *ilm* is incumbent upon each Muslim.”

And he, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said,
مَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقًا يَلْتَمِسُ فِيهِ عِلْمًا سَهَّلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ طَرِيقًا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ. وَإِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ لَتَضَعُ أَجْنِحَتَهَا لِطَالِبِ الْعِلْمِ رِضَاءً بِمَا يَصْنَعُ. وَإِنَّ الْعَالَمَ لَيَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ حَتَّى الْحِيتَانُ فِي الْمَاءِ. وَفَضْلُ الْعَالِمِ عَلَى الْعَابِدِ كَفَضْلِ الْقَمَرِ (لُبْلَةُ الْبَدْرِ) عَلَى سَائِرِ الْكَوَاكِبِ.

¹ End part of Surah 58 al-Mujadala Verse 11:

² End section of Surah 39 az-Zumar Verse 9:

“Whosoever follows a path leading him to knowledge [*ilm*], Allah will make easy for him the path of Paradise, and that angels do indeed spread out their wings to the seeker of knowledge [*ilm*] in satisfaction with what he is doing and that a learned [*Alim*] has the prayers of forgiveness of all that is in the Heavens and the Earth including the residents in the water. The distinction of a learned [*Alim*] upon a devotee is like that of the moon over the other planets.”

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace said,

أَقْرَبُ النَّاسِ مِنْ دَرَجَةِ النَّبُوَّةِ أَهْلُ الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِهَادِ.

“The closest people to the rank of Prophethood are people of knowledge and take action for the cause of Allah [*Jihad*].”

Duty of the learned to show the right path

The existence of the people of knowledge is for them to guide people to the message of the prophets, and the people who fought with their swords [*jihad*] or take action for the cause of Allah is to uphold the Prophets’ message.

Allah, Transcendent and Glorious is He, revealed to Ibrahim, peace be upon him: “O Ibrahim! Verily I am the All-Knowing. I love everyone who knows.”

And said Ali, may Allah honour him, to Kumail bin Ziyad: “O Kumail, knowledge is better than wealth, knowledge protects you, while you have to protect wealth. Knowledge is (your) judge, while wealth is under the sovereignty of knowledge. Wealth diminishes when it is spent while knowledge appreciated by spending.”

And Luqman, (the Wise One), may Allah be pleased with him, said, “Wisdom adds honour to the honored and raises a slave to the assembly of kings.”

Al-Hasan Al-Bishri, may Allah show him mercy, said, “When it is compared, the weight of the ink of the righteous learned against the weight of the blood of those who died in the cause of Allah [*Shuhada*], the ink of the righteous learned will tip over the blood of the *Shuhada*.”

Abu Aswad, may Allah show him mercy, said: “There is nothing nobler than knowledge [*ilm*]. Kings are the sovereign of people, and the righteous learned [*ulama*] are sovereigns of kings.”

Ibn Masud, may Allah show him mercy, said: “Look for and be dedicated to knowledge before it is raised, and it will be raised when the righteous learned passed away. For Allah, whose hands is my soul, people who fell dead in the cause of Allah will dearly love to be rising as a righteous learned for the honour they will see bestowed to them as no one was born a scholar. Verily, knowledge is acquired through learning.”

The above paragraphs briefly profile the merits of knowledge and its devotees to invoke blessings and to draw attention to them.

A unique gift goes to learned righteous who sought knowledge and put it into practice and taught it seeking the pleasure of Allah and the Abode of the hereafter, by the bounty and grace of Allah. There is no such gift for those wicked learned who are seduced away from righteousness. Instead, a lot that is immensely frightening is on record for them, a lot that censures and derogates. We have mentioned some of these earlier on.

We supplicate to Allah to grant us, our dear ones and all Muslims well-being from every evil and seduction and affliction and trial in this world and the next. We supplicate to Him to grant us knowledge that gives benefit and virtuous deeds that, by His generosity, are accepted. And in Allah we seek refuge from knowledge that is of no avail and a heart that does not bow to Him that He may grant us a felicitous ending and bestow good upon us in all-pervading loving-kindness as well as in a state of well-being.

إِنَّهُ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ.

Verily He is the Most Merciful of the Merciful.



Chapter Two

The Second Category

دَعْوَةُ الْعِبَادِ وَالزُّهَّادِ

A Call to the Devotees and the Ascetics

This second category composed of devotees and ascetics, they are diligent and hardworking in doing good deeds, those who devoted themselves whole-heartedly to Allah, to obey Him, worshipping Him, doing divine service, excellence in conduct and religious practices for the sack of Him. We present a word of warning, advice, and caution,

It should realise that the population of this category is the elect servants of Allah, the focus of His Compassionate Providence. Such an elected plethora of people is the fountain of Allah's light, the treasures of his secrets. In most cases, the beloved of Allah [*Wali*] and His elects are amongst them. They are the Holders of the Faith [*Awtad*], the deputies of faith [*Abdal*], Chiefs [*Nuqada*] and the Noble [*Nujabaa*] from among the people. From them, the essences of sincerity, fidelity, reliance upon Allah and asceticism can be learned, such and other domains of certitude [*yaqin*] and the secrets of religious practices can also be acquired from them.

These are the Sufis, the elect. They are the 'pious' and the innocent. They are the people of truth and certitude, the Path-seekers who have partaken of the secrets of the Path [*Tariqa*]. They belong to the assembly of the beloved by Allah. They are under the canopy of Divine Providence by their blessings, and the granted are their supplications, others seek their intercession for the removal of their afflictions, the

ending of their persecution, and invoke mercy upon town and hamlet, upon whole countries and dwellers therein. May Allah cause us and, as well as our dear ones and all Muslims, to benefit from them and enable us to receive the touch of their secrets and their blessings.

Now, know that these are the people whose way of life and mannerism one should follow, especially for the beginners and path-seekers who need an introduction, a reminder, education, and warning.

We, therefore, discuss these issues in such a way as Allah, the Exalted, make easy for us and in the same manner as we have, with Allah's facilitation, already explained the state of the first category, namely the "Learned of the Faith" [*ulama ad'deen*]. We supplicate to Allah, the Great, to bless us as well as them in this undertaking, and in all that He has endowed them and us of His grace and beneficence; and that he may grant us the gift of thanksgiving for His bounties, the gift that invokes more benefits from His beneficence. Verily, He is the Munificent, the Bountiful, there is no might nor power other than Allah the Exalted, He to us suffices, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs.

Path to the Hereafter

You should know that Allah may shower His mercy upon those who wish to seek the Path of Allah and resolves to devote himself entirely Him and to free his self from all other diversions to the Glorious Exalted, He must look carefully into the matter. If he has learnt the fundamental sciences of faith [*Iman*] and the sciences of Islam, he then can set off on worship with the complete devotion, striving to dissolve and remove the obstacles in his path, and present himself before Allah, outwardly and inwardly, towards the road to the Hereafter. However, if he has not obtained such necessary knowledge, he must learn first for that is incumbent upon him before he undertakes worship and seeks the Path to renunciation.

The Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ.

"Seeking knowledge [*'ilm*] is imperative upon every Muslim."

A saying of the Companions or the Successors indicates that, “Whosoever worships Allah with ignorance, ends in earning more harm out of worshipping than good.”

The seekers of the Path of Allah must, therefore, study sciences of faith [*Iman*] and Islamic Principles [*Islam*], which make his creed concerning knowing Allah, the Exalted, and His Attributes, belief in the Messengers and the Last Day well grounded. Amongst these sciences, the Sciences of Ritual Cleansing [ablution], then Prayers, Fasting, Zakat and going for Haj.

In short, he should not undertake any of the acts of worship nor embrace customary transactions like marriage or commerce until he knows the law of Allah in such matters. Otherwise, he will get into trouble consciously or inadvertently, and he will not be excused.

Knowing the Aqidah of the Faithful

In the area of the Faith [*Iman*], it suffices him to understand and know well some of the creeds of those Imams whose learnedness was agreed upon, thus their reliability and virtuousness, like for example *al-Imam Hujjatul Islam* (Imam Ghazali) and his doctrine which he set forth at the beginning of the Book of '*Qawaidi al-Aqaid*' in *Ihya Ulumiddin*. This is sufficient and complete. We¹ also have cited at the beginning of the Book “Gifts of the Seeker” [*Ittihafus Sa'il*] and the end of the book Religious Advice [*An-Nasha'ih Ad-Diniyah*] a brief but comprehensive account of creeds that should suffice for a devoted Path-Seeker.

As for the science of Islam known as the Science of Law or Statutes [*Ahkam*], it suffice for path-seekers to know what *Hujjatul Islam* (Imam Ghazali) may Allah be pleased with him, documented in “The Dawn of Guidance” [*Bidayatul Hidayah*] except that this reference does not include the necessary instruction of Zakat and Pilgrimage [*Haj*], which he referred readers to his Book *Ihya Ulumid-Din*. A devotee may find it sufficient to read ‘The Simplified Brief’ [*Mukhtashar al -Latif*], authored by the very learned jurisprudent, Abdullah bin Abdul Rahman

¹ The author, Imam Abdullah al-Haddad, is referring to his books.

bin al-Haj *Abu Fadhl*¹ may Allah's mercy be upon him. Should the student needs further information, an alternative would be the sheikh's 'The Full Brief' [*Al-Mukhtashar Al-Kabir*] with commentaries by ash-Shaykh Ahmad bin Hajar al-Haitami² may Allah's mercy be upon him.

With Divine assistance, and if graced with time, we have it in mind to write a book comprising all that people of devotion and Muslims, in general, need to know of the sciences of faith and Islam and *Ihsan* (beneficence). Such a work as we intend to put together will be a commentary on the hadith of Jibril, upon whom be peace, wherein he asked the Messenger, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, about these sciences.

It is not necessary to study a broader topic in detail Even though it is encouraged

As for going deep and wide in such sciences, it is not of the concern of ordinary people. Instead, it is the duty of competent and qualified Imams of religion, who have devoted themselves to such pursuits and who are the signposts of Islamic tradition. Allah, the Exalted has appointed and endowed them with competence to benefit and guide servants by explaining the laws governing their present and future lives.

At times, Allah may combine both intrinsic and extrinsic sciences within the elect among the believers and qualify them to benefit all and sundry. Allah may endow such elect of His with the knowledge of the Islamic Law [*Shari'ah*], the quest for the Path and contemplation of the True State of Affairs [*Haqiqah*],

To this school of the elect belong a whole host of virtuous righteous predecessors like our leader [*Saiyidina*] al-Imam Zainal Abidin Ali bin Al-Husayn bin Amirul Mukminin, and his son 'Abi Jaffar'

¹ Abu Fadhl was borned in Tarim Hadhramaut on 850 H and passed away in Syehir on 915H. He was well-known as a learned in Jurisprudence during his period.

² bin Hajar is known as Imam Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Ali bin Hajar Al-Haitami As Sa'di Al-Ansari Asy-Syafi's He was borned in Cairo on 909H and passed away during the month in Mecca on 974H.

Muhammad al-Baqir, and his son al-Imam Jaffar *Ash-Shadiq* bin Muhammad, the virtuous righteous leader [*Khalifa*] Umar bin Abdul Aziz al-Umawi, also the likes of ‘Abi Said’ al-Hasan bin Yasar al-Bishri¹. Several others came after them including Shaikh Al-Haris bin Asad al-Muhasibi and Shaikh al-Junaid bin Muhammad². Then some followed after that like Shaikh Abul Qasim Abdul Karim bin Hawazin Al-Qushayri,³ the author of its Thesis [*Ar-Risalah Al-Qusyairiyyah*]. Then the likes of *Hujjatul-Islam* Abu Hamid al-Ghazali and Shaikh Muhyiddin Abdul Qadir bin Abu Salih ash-Sharif al-Hasani al-Jailani, and Shaikh Abu Hafsh Umar bin Muhammad as-Sohrawardi⁴, the author of the book *al-'Awdrif* and his uncle Shaikh Abin-Najib as-Sohrawardi⁵ and many more others among the learned Imams.

From amongst the noble in the family tree of the illustrious Ba-Alawi, the descendants of al-Husain, a large group indeed held many of the attributes set out earlier. These distinguished people with a firm foundation of knowledge [*ilm*] and faith [*Imam*], who assembled the outer and inner knowledge, coupled with the mastery of the Law [*Shari'ah*], the Creed and Order [*Tariqa*] and the contemplation of the True State of Affairs [*Haqiqah*] were people like the Sheikh of all Sheikhs al-Faqih al-Muqaddam Muhammad bin Ali ash-Sharif, al-Husaini At-Tarimi⁶

¹ He was an Imam from among the followers [*Tabi'in*] who passed away in 110 H.

² Abi Qasim whose origin was from Nahawand, he was born and raised in Iraq. He was the Imam of his people and leader of his community [*Saiyidut Thaifah*], passed away in Baghdad in the year 297 after Hijrah.

³ He passed away in 465 Hijrah in Naisabur, and was the Sheikh for the town of Khurasan during his time.

⁴ Passed away in Baghdad in 632 after Hijrah, he was a descendant from the Quraishy of the Taim Bakri clan. He was a scholar in Jurisprudent of the Shafii mazhab and also known for his Sufi way and called unto Allah.

⁵ His name is Abdul Qadir and whose surname is Dhia'uddin. His ascendant led to our leader [Saiyidina] Abu Bakr Ash-Shiddiq r.a. The learned scholars agreed about his extraordinary knowledge and many Islamic scholars studied under his wings. He lived in Baghdad until his demised in 563 Hijrah at his Madrasah near the cost of Dijlah.

⁶ He was born in Tarim, Hadhramaut and passed away there in 653Hijrah. He was known as the greatest of teacher [al-Ustaz al-Azham] and also as the Foremost Jurisprudent [Al-Faqih Al Muqaddam].

Others like the respectful *ash-Shaykh* Abdul Rahman bin Muhammad as-Saqqaf¹, his son *ash-Shaykh Qudwa* Umar Al-Mihdhar² and his grandson *ash-Shaykh Qutub* Abdullah bin Ash-Shaykh Abu Bakr al-Aidrus³ and his brother *Al-Shaykh Al-Jamii* 'Ali bin AbuBakr⁴.

From amongst the respectable members of the House of *Ba'Alawi*, there was a long list of them, who held a firm grip onto these virtues, and these are reflected from the study of their secret virtuous lives, and reports and records of the life histories. May Allah endow us to benefits from them as well as from all the other righteous servants, and may Allah pour upon us their blessings and, by virtue of their secrets, may He protect us from evil, from those who are evil, from affliction and from those who are afflicted. Verily he is the Munificent, the Generous, the Ever-Near and Responder to Supplications.

The custom of the noble people of this path was to obtain only such necessary knowledge. So that they used their time to dedicate themselves to worship with complete devotion to Allah, the Exalted, allowing nothing whatsoever to divert them from the Exalted and the acts of His worship.

Amongst these people were a Yemeni named Uwais Al-Qarani, he was from Yemen who embraced Islam in the lifetime of the Prophet but was not able to come to Medina to visit him as he was serving his mother.

Malik bin Dinar, his name is Abu Yahya Az-Zahid, he offered his service to write copies of the Quran [*Mushaf*] from which he received his

¹ He was the Imam Abdul Rahman bin Muhammad Maulad-Dawilah bin Ali bin Alwi that demised in Tarim, Hadhramaut in the year 819 H.

² He was born in Tarim, studied Quran there, later the Sciences of Faith and Islam. He was of high reputes, esteem and experienced some miracles in his life time. He passed away kneeling down in [*sujud*] in his prayer's prostration in 833H.

³ He was born in Tarim, studied Quran and later the Sciences of Faith and Islam. He was the Imam and leading Sheikh acknowledged by the people during his period. He passed away at the age of 54 year old in 865H.

⁴ He was born in Tarim, studied Quran and later the Sciences of Faith and Islam. He was famous for his numerous worship [*ibadah*] and good deeds like those of his ancestors of the *Alawiyin* clan. He passed away in 895H.

stipends. He passed away in 127H, and others recorded it as 123H and in the book “*Thabaqat*” it was 131H.

Abdul Wahid bin Zaid, he passed away in 110H in the same period as al-Hasan al-Bishri. He prayed throughout the day with the ablution from the previous night’s Isya’ prayers for forty years.

Utbah Al-Ghulam, his named is Utbah bin Abaan and was known as Utbah Al-Ghulam because in his worship he acts as the servant [*Ghulam*] to the Christian monks. He frequently stayed in the graveyards, deserts and sometimes by the beach for some time. During Fridays, he returned to Basrah (southern port of Iraq) for Friday Prayers and also to meet a few friends to inquire on their affairs. Passed away [*syahid*] in the war against the Romans (Thabaqat 1:40).

arRabik bin Khaitham, he is Ibnu A’id Al-Kufi passed away in 67H during the period of Mu’awiyah.

Tsabit Al-Bunani, he is Tsabit bin Asad Al-Bunani. There were reports that after he passed away and buried, some people heard the recitation of Al-Quran from his grave.

Habib Al-Ajami, he is Abu Muhammad Habib bin Muhammad Al-Ajami Al-Bishri, well known for his good deeds, piety, pious and Allah-Fearing [*Taqwa*]. His prayers and calls were answered by Allah consistently.

Ibrahim bin Adham, he is ‘Abu Ishak’ Ibrahim bin Adham bin Mansur and a member of the Balkh royalty who lived very well. One day, while he was out hunting, he heard a call from the sky that made him realised his heedlessness. He then left all the wealthy and royal way of life and returned to the road [*Thariqat*] of piety and ascetics. He then travelled to Mecca to accompanied Sufyan Ats-Tsauri and people like him. Later he went to Syria [*Syams*] and worked with his own hands. He passed away in Syria in 161H.

Al-Fudhail bin Iyadh, At-Tamimi Al-Yarbu’i, a settler from Khurasan near Marwu, passed away in Mecca [*Haram Sharif*] in 187H.

Wuhaib bin Al-Ward, Wuhaib bin Al-Ward bin Abul Ward Al-Quraishi, his name was Abdul Wahhab, and his surname was ‘Wuhaib’. He is a worshipper that put aside the world and its luxuries.

Daud Ath-Tha'I, he was Abu Sulaiman Daud bin Nushair Al-Kufi, the doors of piety and ascetics, passed away in 160H, some say it was in 165H.

Ma'rouf Al-Karkhi, his surname is ‘Az-Zahid’ that is ‘ascetics’ [Zuhud], he was a respectful Sheikh and famous for his piety, his prayers answered. Original, a slave named Ali bin Musa Ar-Ridha, passed away in Baghdad in 200H and buried there.

Bishr Al-Hafi, he was Bisyr bin Al-Haris Abu Nushair. Al-Khatib said, “He was the most among the piety, pious and ascetics of his time, an extraordinary intelligence, travel the straight path [*istighamah*] and honest, lived in Baghdad and passed away in 227H.

Sariy As-Saqathi, he was known as Abul Hasan Sariy bin Al-Mughallas As-Saqathi, Imam of the people of Baghdad and their leading Sheikh during his time. He was the first person to speak of the science of theology, the Oneness of God [*Tauhid*] and the real state of affairs, passed away in 251H.

Sahil Al-Tustari or Abu Muhammad Sahel bin Abdullah As-Tustari, an Imam and a learned man of one of the famous tribes, always discussing the science of sports (or mathematics), faithfulness and man’s shortcoming in regards to his spiritual actions [*Tasawuf*]. He passed away in 283H. May Allah show them mercy.

Those who tread the Path to Allah

They withdrew themselves from people, rarely mixing with them. Many of them led their way to the mountains and bushes, and roamed the wastelands; all this to discipline the ego, to rid its habits and to authenticate their levels of certitude, like trusting in Allah, exclusive sincerity in Him, renunciation of the mundane, of wealth, of prestige, and status in the hearts of people.

Most people of Allah were like this, having these attributes and were wedded to this Path. Even when they happened to come out to meet with people, they used to sit with the special and with whom they discussed special sciences [*ulum*].

However, if people overwhelmed one of them, he would rise and go into retreat. On occasions, he would go even as far as having doors locked because of the subtlety of the science under discussion between himself and his companions.

They used to run away from fame and decline offers of magisterial positions, and similar positions of authority and judicial; and they would distance themselves from ordinary people so that they may devote their attention to themselves and were ardently anxious about the well-being of their religion and their souls.

Famous Leading Personality

For example, when Haram bin Hayyan¹ met Uways al-Qarani, may Allah show mercy on both of them, on the shore of Euphrates, after looking for him for sometimes, he said to him: “Relate to me a hadith that I can learn by heart, and which comes from the Messenger, may Allah blessings and peace be upon him.” Uways said to him; “I did not meet the Messenger of Allah (by my father and mother, O Messenger of Allah!) however, I have met people who saw him, and some of the hadith have reached me, but I would rather not open this door upon myself. I have an absorbing preoccupation with my soul! I would rather not be a *Muhadith*, a *Mufti* or a *Qadhi*,” or as he (may Allah have mercy on him) said. The incident is well known.

It was being said, “Bishr al-Harith was like a fresh fountain where from one person after another would go to draw water.” Ahmad bin Hanbal was said to be like the Tigris from which both the virtuous and the wicked resorted.

¹ Haram bin Haiyan Al-Abdi Al-Azdi from the clan of Bani Abdul Qais, was a famous ascetics and successful followers of the faith [*Tabi'in*]. Once a right-hand man of Abdul Qais, and led an army in a war against the Persians during the rule of Umar bin Usman. He lived in Basrah. Ibnu Abi Hatim categories him as one of the eight leading people who passed away *zahid* among the *Tabi'in*, in a war he led in 26H.

Bishr, may Allah have mercy on him said “Ahmad bin Hanbal, may Allah have mercy on him, was given preference over me on three things. One of them is that he has been appointed Imam for ordinary people.” Then Ahmad used to say about Bishr that “He (Bishr) rests upon me like the edge of a sword.” That is by virtue of his preemptive piety and extreme virtue in religion and reducing himself to the very minimum when it comes to worldly things. From these instances, it is obvious how each Imam set in precedence his companion over himself and attested to this precedence.

Then said Bishr: “I crave to talk about hadith, yet I would do so only when my craving to deliver the hadith disappears.” It is also related that he buried tens of containers of books because he was afraid that those without understanding might read it.

al-Imam Muhammad bin Yusof al-Aswfihani lamented and crying out in grief when he was seen burying his books and saying: “I was a *Muhaddith* but did it matter? I was a Mufti but did it matter? I was a Qadhi but did it matter?” or as he said.

Such was the dedication and commitment of these folks. They devoted themselves to Allah and the Hereafter with sincere devotion and attended to themselves so that they worship their Lord. The truth about them is that “The learned [*‘ulama*] were such that when they learn, they tend to put their learning into practice. When they put it into practice, they become preoccupied. The state being as such, others miss them and eventually they would be sought. When they are sought out, they will flee” out of ardent anxiety for their religion, and to guard themselves against what would divert from divine service and worship to their Lord.

In those times, the learned [*‘ulama*] existed abundantly. It used to be the case that others were fulfilling the collective obligation [*fardh kifayah*] of teaching. The learned were thus allowed to free themselves for good deeds [*‘amal*] and devotions, to go into retreats away from people, and to turn with all their hearts and minds to the Hereafter. They gave up whatever pre-occupations that may hold them back from devoting themselves to their Lord and acts of obedience to Him.

Many learned lived to practised

Now, among essential tasks on the part of the seekers of this Path, after acquiring the necessary knowledge, is to give utmost attention and ardent anxiety to get lawful sustenance and to economise on such necessities of life as food and clothing. They should not be negligent in that nor should they take liberties, as is the case with ordinary people. Instead, they should make an effort in seeking what is lawful, that which is free from all taints.

Should that be readily available amongst people, well and good! If not, they should go and seek it where it can be found with ease, like in the mountains, the wilderness where allowable, food is available, even it be grass.

Many of the men of Allah, who take special care about the purity and soundness of their hearts, and their aptitude for the knowledge of Allah, the revelation of His secrets and the unseen worlds in His Reign and Universe, may Allah be pleased with them all, have done this and kept to it. We heard that some of them used to live on the grass to the extent that his body turned green!

While some of them who failed to get lawful would swallow sand for many days, this has been reported by Sufyan Ats-Tsauri and many others. May Allah show them mercy.

All things are Halal if there is no reason to forbid it

It is true that, as the learned, may Allah show them mercy, say, the lawful is that for which there is no apparent reason for the man to make it unlawful, and that it is permissible in law to deal with someone, most of whose wealth is lawful, and this is particularly convenient for ordinary Muslims to make life easy for them, as Allah has imposed no difficulties on them in religion. However, in matters which is allowable [*ja'iz*] or not prohibited [*mubah*] (i.e. one with a choice of to do it or not), and where there are allowance and tolerance which all lie outside the higher rank of preemptive piety [*warak*], caution and commitment to the prescribed goals of religion. Such that, for each individual, has his status and each situation a particular right.

In their diligent search for the purely lawful, some people of this category confined themselves to the absolute minimum that will give them the strength to perform the ordinances of Allah and the obligation of His religion. Some of them survived on the bare minimum. Sahel bin Abdullah At-Tustari and others recorded their life histories and reflections on these matters, as he explained in a chapter that he and other Imams compiled from their book papers of scientism¹ and made available in four sections of four categories. Similarly, *Hujjatul-Islam* Imam Ghazali, may Allah be pleased with him, has expounded in detail on this in his book “Breaking the two Appetites” in “Ihya Ulumiddin”, and other papers of his, regarding this knowledge, their creed and doctrines.

Abu Sulaiman ad-Darani² may Allah show him mercy, used to say, “Worship is sweetest when my stomach touches my back³.” He also said, “To give up a handful of food at dinner is better to me than standing up at night.” Similarly, such statements (made by other learned) on the topic are numerous and well known.

Their Doctrines and Creed

Some of them have reduced the principles of this creed to four things: a little food, a little sleep, a few words, and retreat from men. Adding: This is how a devout understudy worshipper [*Abdal*] become Sires Saints (deputies of the prophet) [*Abdalan*] and the four principles constitute the pillars of the house of sainthood. On that, the learned say in a poem:

بَيْتُ الْوَلَايَةِ قَسَمْتُ أَزْكَاهُ سَادَتْنَا مِنْ الْأَبْدَالِ

“The (four) pillars of Sainthood was built
by our leaders from a group of its Abdals.”

مَا بَيْنَ صَمْتٍ وَاعْتِزَالٍ دَائِمٍ وَالْجُوعِ وَالسَّهَرِ النَّزِيهِ الْعَالِي

“These are silence, an unending solitude,
Then hunger and hallowed wakefulness.”

¹ Scientism here refers to knowledge with true and real references and test compiled.

² His full name was Abu Sulaiman Abdul Rahman bin Athuyah Ad-Darani from Dariya, a village near Damascus. He was very concerned with factuality and piety [*warak*]. He passed away in 215H.

³ This is an expression of a state of extreme hunger.

We have strung them thus in a single line at the end verse of the poetry [*Taiyyah*], that is:

وَكُنْ فِي طَعَامٍ وَالْمَنَامِ وَخُلْطَةٍ وَنُطْقٍ عَلَى حَدِّ اقْتِصَارٍ وَقَلَّةٍ

“Be vigilance and sparing in (your) food, sleep, associations of people.”
Speak only to limit your status and required speeches.

In the Beholding Poem [*Raiyyah*] whose opening (verse) is:

يَا زَائِرِي حِينَ لَا وَاشٍ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ - - -

(We have said thus): “O callers, in awhile, no talebearer of glad tidings,

وَبِالرِّيَاضَةِ مِنْ صَمْتٍ وَمُخْمَصَةٍ مَعَ التَّخَلِّي عَنْ الْأَضْدَادِ وَالسَّهْرِ

With the discipline of silence and hunger shall shun the opposites keep
awake the worshipping eye (when others closed theirs).

Also at the end of the Kitab “*Al Ainiyyah*,”

وَالنَّفْسُ رُضْهَا بِاعْتِزَالٍ دَائِمٍ وَالصَّمْتُ مَعَ سَهْرِ الدَّجَى وَتَجَوُّعٍ

“As for the rebellious ego, tame it with constant solitude,
Long silent, with the nightly vigilance and hunger.”

Indeed, Hatim Al-Asham,¹ may Allah have mercy on him said,
“Whoever wishes to tread our path [*thariqat*] should accustom himself to
four types of death.

- (1) The white death, which is hunger;
- (2) The red death, which is self-discipline;
- (3) The green death, which is to use cloths with patches of
rags, one upon another;
- (4) The black death, which is forbearance in the face of
harassment by men, or similarly as he said.

Al-Junaid may Allah have mercy on him said, “This path
[*thariqat*] of ours does not befit, except those folks who are willing to
sweep rubbish heaps with their souls”.

¹ His full name is Abu Abdul Rahman Hatim bin Unwan bin Yusuf Al-Asham, one of
the eldest Imam and teacher [*Mashakhir*] in the country of Khurasan from the area of
Balkh. He passed away in 237H.

That is to be humble before Allah, in their humility to His Beings, in their reverence and awe to His Greatness.

The Followers of this Path [*Thariqat*] is in the Decline

You should know that the sincerely genuine companions of this path have become few and scarce to find, it is rarer than the Philosopher's Brimstone [*Al-Kibrit Al-Ahmar*] (an expression used in *Tasawuf* to indicate its scarceness).

Some masters of certainty [*Muhaqqiqin*] went on to said, "They are non-existent, and the Earth has parted with them." There is a view about this observation as what is extremely rare and scarce can metaphorically speaking, be said to be non-existent. The Earth cannot be void of a man, such as would stand up to establish and uphold Allah's arguments. There is a hadith which content states,

لَا تَزَالُ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِي ظَاهِرِينَ عَلَى الْحَقِّ لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ مَنْ خَذَلَهُمْ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَهُمْ عَلَى ذَلِكَ.

"There is still a batch of my people [*ummah*] standing up for the truth, irrespective of those who failed them until Allah's command descend while they are holding this attitude."

In another Hadith, he, may blessings and peace be upon him said,

لَيَجِدَنَّ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مِنْ أُمَّتِي رِجَالًا هُمْ مِثْلُ حَوَارِيِّيهِ وَخَيْرٌ مِنْهُمْ.

"Verily, the son of Maryam will find men in my people [*ummah*] like his disciples and better than them."

However, they will continue to be few, who will stay undercover during the times of immorality and perversion, where trials are abounding, and distraction from and disregard of Allah hold sway. Some of them would distance themselves from men while living amidst them; some will disguise themselves as in engagement in a craft or something like it; and some would take to the deserts and wastelands, fleeing to Allah with His religion and from affliction and the afflicted."

Some who are cognizant [*al-'Arifin*] (those in possession of divine knowledge) has said (in paraphrase), "The people of Truth have

fled from the public sight to deserts and wastelands. Because they cannot bear looking at the learned of wickedness [*'ulama ussu*], who think they are learned [*'ulama*]! But they are ignorant in the sight of the people of Allah, Glorious and Exalted is He, namely the people of truth.” Briefly, this completes what they said.

Members of this path have no desire to be famous

Indeed, the people of this path are most ardently particular about veiling and falling into oblivion, and staying away from people, especially when times are corrupt. It is to members of this folks that he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him hinted,

كَمْ مِنْ أَشْعَثَ أَغْبَرَ ذِي طَمَرَيْنِ لَا يُؤْبَهُ بِهِ، لَوْ أَقْسَمَ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِأَبْرَةٍ.

“How many men in shabby clothes, who are inconsequential, yet were they to take an oath in Allah’s name, Allah would honour it.”

Among them is Al-Baraa' bin Malik. He, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْعَبْدَ التَّقِيَّ الْعَنِيَّ الْخَفِيَّ.

“Verily, Allah loves a servant who holds Allah in reverential awe [*takwa*], who is rich (the heart of contentment) and hiding (unknown).”¹

A man asked the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, “O Messenger of Allah, who is the most distinguished man?”

He answered, “A Believer who strives with his life and wealth in the path of Allah.” Then the man asked, “Then who?” He answered, “A man who has sought the solitude in one of the mountain paths to worship Allah and spare the public his wickedness.” Then he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَكُونَ خَيْرُ مَالِ الْمُسْلِمِ غَنَمًا يَتْبَعُ بِهَا شَعَفَ الْجِبَالِ وَمَوَاقِعَ الْقَطْرِ،
يَفْرُ بِدِينِهِ مِنَ الْفِتَنِ.

“It’s almost as if Muslim’s best-invested wealth is a flock of sheep which he leads to mountain tops and dangerous terrain as he flees with his religion from trials.”

¹ A hadith narrated by Ahmad.

According to Mu'az, may Allah's mercy be upon him, the Messenger, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said, "A little of hypocrisy in worship [*riya*] is polytheism [*syirik*]. Whosoever commits hostility against Allah's saints [*wali*]; he has declared war on Allah. Verily, Allah loves those of His virtuous servants, they who adore and hold Him in reverential awe, the anonymous in their deeds; when absent they are not missed; when present they are unknown; their hearts are the lanterns of righteousness. They find a way out of every earthly grievance."

Then he, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said, "The most coveted man to me is a believer who owns but little, who is endowed with a share of prayers, whose sustenance is just enough and with that he is patient until he meets his Lord; and he fulfils the worship [*ibadah*] of his Lord with beneficence [*ihsan*]. He is anonymous amongst men. His death comes early; his legacy is meagre, his mourners few."

About him someone has composed the following poem,

أَخْصُ النَّاسِ بِالْإِيمَانِ عَبْدٌ خَفِيفُ الْحَاذِ مَسْكَنُهُ الْقِفَارُ
لَهُ بِاللَّيْلِ حَظٌّ مِنْ صَلَاةٍ وَمِنْ صَوْمٍ إِذَا طَلَعَ النَّهَارُ
وَفِيهِ عَقَّةٌ وَبِهِ حُمْلٌ إِلَيْهِ بِالْأَصَابِعِ لَا يُشَارُ
وَقَلَّ الْبَاكِياتُ عَلَيْهِ لَمَّا قَضَى نَحْبًا وَلَيْسَ لَهُ يَسَارُ

The most faithful servant is he who owns, whose dwelling in the bush lie, In prayers he wiles part of the night while fasting as the day breaks. He is decent and self-effaced, no fingers point towards him (unknown)! When he departs the final departure, no mourners escort him, and there is nothing for his inheritor.

In his book, "Gardens of Wali Allah" [*Raudh ar-Raiyahin*], namely in the 145th episode, Shaikh Imam Abdullah bin As'ad al-Yafi'i Al-Yamani¹, may Allah have mercy on him, said, "It is narrated that

¹ This gentleman originated from the section of Yafi' of the clan of Himyar, he was born and raised in Aden, Yemen and passed away in Mecca in 768H. His book mentioned above concerned stories of Wali Allah. It is a must reading.

Uwais al-Qarani¹ may Allah be pleased with him, used to eat from the rubbish heaps and clothe himself from it. A dog barked at him on a rubbish heap. Uwais may Allah have mercy on him told it, “Eat from your side and I am eating on my side. Do not bark! If I make it across the *Sirat*², then I am better than you are; otherwise, you are better than me!”

His family members used to say he was mad, his relatives used to make fun of him, and little children would never leave him alone and would throw stones at him. About him I said,

سَقَى اللَّهُ قَوْمًا مِنْ شَرَابٍ وَدَادِهِ فَهَامُوا بِهِ بَيْنَ بَادٍ وَخَاضِرٍ
يَظُنُّهُمْ الْجُهَّالُ جُنُودًا وَمَا بِهِمْ جُنُونٌ سِوَى حُبٍّ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ ظَاهِرٍ
سُقُوا بِكُؤُوسِ الْحُبِّ رَاحًا مِنَ الْهَوَى فَرَاخُوا سُكَارَى بِالْحَبِيبِ الْمُسَامِرِ
يُنَاجُونَهُ فِي ظُلْمَةِ اللَّيْلِ عِنْدَمَا بِهِ قَدْ خَلَوْا مِنْهُمْ أَوْيَسُ بْنُ عَامِرٍ

“Allah served a certain folks with the draught of his love, in thrill and frenzy they swayed, Wherever they went the dull of wit fancied them as mad, yet they were not mad, enwrap by divine lovesick, they were a quaff of love’s vintage, Cupped them in rapture with a passion of a beloved, (He) Who kept them company, In the dusk of the night, when no souls were present, to that hallowed Host call His name in intimate converse, Uwais bin Amir.”

A Narration about Uwais Al-Qarani

According to a hadith attributed to Abu Hurayrah, may Allah have mercy on him, who narrated that the Messenger, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said, “Verily, Allah, the Exalted, loves those of His created beings, the pure who are anonymous, virtuous, dishevelled, unkempt, the empty of the stomach. If they ask permission to enter upon the authorities, they will be dismissed. If they were to ask the hands of a rich woman in marriage, they would be shunned. When they are absent,

¹ His full name was Uwais bin Amir bin Juzu’ from a clan of Qaran. He was amongst those who followed the way of the prophet [*Tabi’in*], a great ascetics [*Zahid*], with little clothes and possessions. It was narrated that he was killed in the fight at Shiffin with Saiyidina Ali may Allah Honor him, in 37H.

² *Sirat* is the testing bridge over hell on the way to heaven.

they are not missed. When they appear, they cause no delight. When they fall sick, they are not visited, and none bears them witnessed when they die.” They said, “O *Rasullullah*, how about depicting to us one from this group.” He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said, “That is Uwais al-Qarani.”

They asked, “And who is Uwais al-Qarani?” He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him answered, “He has bluish-black eyes with a touch of red, with broad shoulders, of medium height, and very skinny. His chin is glued to his chest and his eyes intent on the spot of his prostration [*sujud*], with his right hand resting on his left. He cries over himself. He is bedraggled; he has but a wool loincloth and wool attire. He is unknown to the people on earth, yet those in Heaven well know him. Were he to pronounce an oath in Allah’s name, Allah will surely honour his promise. Indeed, there radiates a white glitter beneath his left shoulder. Verily, on the Day of Judgment, servants (of Allah) will be told, ‘Enter Paradise.’ And it will be said to Uwais, ‘Stand and intercede.’ And Allah will grant him an intercession over a people (as many as) those of *Rabia* and *Mudhar*. O Umar, O Ali, if you meet him, ask him to seek forgiveness for both of you and Allah will forgive you.”

The narration continued, “Then the two comrades set looking for him for ten years in vain. At the end of the year in which ‘Umar was to depart, he stood at the top of the hill ‘Abi Qubais’ and cried out at the top of his voice: “O people of Yemen is there Uwais amongst you?” An old man with a thick beard stood up and said, “We do not know to which Uwais you are referring! But, I have a nephew called Uwais, he is unknown, his possessions are meagre, and he is of too little consequence for us to bring him before you. He looks after our camels. He is a humble fellow amongst our clan.”

‘Umar pretended as if he was not interested in him; and said: “Where is the son of your brother? Is he round here?” He said: “Yes” “Where is he to be found?” He said: “At a place called Arak in Arafat.”

The narrator continued: “Umar and Ali, may Allah be pleased with them, got on their mounts and hurried to Arafat. They found him performing prayers near a tree and camels grazing around him, so they

tied their two donkeys. Then they approached him. Together they said, “Peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah and His blessings.”

Uwais reduced his prayers. Then he returned their greetings. Together they said: “Who might you be?” Uwais answered, “A camel herdsman and an employee of a folk,” They said: “We are not asking you about herding and employment. What is your name?” He answered, “Abdullah, the servant of Allah.” They said: “We know that those human beings who are on earth and in Heaven are all servants of Allah. What is the name which your mother named you?”

Uwais was at ease with them, and he said: “O you two, what do you want from me?” They said: “The Prophet may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him described to us Uwais al-Qarani. We have identified him with the bluish-black eyes and a touch of red. He told us there is a ‘white-glow’ beneath his left shoulder. Please lift it for us. If you have the ‘white-glow’, then you are he.”

Uwais raised his shoulder to show Umar and Ali what was below it. There was indeed a white glow patch, and they kiss it. Then they said: “We testify that you are Uwais al-Qarani. Ask Allah to grant us forgiveness and Allah will forgive you.”

Uwais felt awkward and said, “I do not set aside my request for forgiveness [*istighfar*] neither for myself nor for the children of Adam, but I make it for the sake of all creatures at sea and land from amongst the believing man and women, and those who submit to His will, both men and women.”

Uwais then said, “O you two, Allah revealed my identity to you as well as my affair. But who are you?”

Quickly Ali, may Allah honour him, answered: “As for this one, he is Umar, Amir al-Mu’uminin and as for myself, I am Ali bin Abi Talib.” Uwais stood up and said, “Peace be upon you, O Amir al-Mu’uminin, and the Mercy of Allah as well as His blessings, upon you, and you, son of Abi Talib. May Allah reward you both with goodness on behalf of this nation [*ummah*].”

To what Uwais said, both Umar and Ali responded: “and may Allah reward you with good on behalf of yourself.” Then Umar, may Allah have mercy on him, added: “Can you remain here until I enter Makkah? Then I will bring you provisions as my contribution and extra clothing that I have. Let us agree to meet here.”

Uwais replied, “O Amir al-Mu’uminin, there is no rendezvous between you and me. I will not see you after today. Please tell me, what will I do with the provisions? What will I do with clothing? Do you not see that I have two loincloths of wool? When will I wear them out? Have not you seen that I have taken four dirhams as payment for herding camels, when do you see me spending them? O Amir al-Mu’uminin, ahead of me and ahead of you, there are many difficult obstacles, none will overcome them except those skinny, light and lean. So be light and lean, may Allah show you Mercy.”

When Umar heard this, he hit his lash on the ground then shouted at the top of his voice, “Would it not be better that Umar was not born by his mother! Would it not be better that she was sterile and did not nurse his pregnancy! O Faith, who would like to take it from my hand and take the responsibilities (he, Umar was referring to the Caliphate).” Then he (Uwais) said, “O Amirul Mu’uminin, you go onto your intended way, and I will go on to my intended one.” Then Umar took the path leading to Mecca and Uwais herded his camels until he brought them to their owners, and handed them over. He (Uwais) then gave up the job of a herdsman to devote himself to worship until he met Allah, the Exalted.

Another narration regarding Uwais

It was mentioned in Sahih Muslim that Saiyidina Umar bin al-Khattab, may Allah have mercy on him said: “I heard the Messenger may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said that there would come to you Uwais bin Amir with several followers from Yemen, in the direction of Murad, then Qaran. He suffered from leprosy and was cured but for a spot the size of a dirham. Uwais was extremely kind and loyal to his mother. Were he to pronounce an oath in the name of Allah, Allah will surely honour his oath. If you can get him to ask for forgiveness for you, do so.” The

hadith continues up to the point where ‘Umar meets with him (Uwais) and makes his request, “Seek forgiveness for me, and he (Uwais) asked for forgiveness.” Then he asked: “What is your destination?” He (Uwais) said, “The City of Kufah.” He (Umar) said, “Can I write to its governor?” He (Uwais) said, “I much prefer to be amongst the poor and unknown.” A part of the Hadith above.

According to Muslim’s version as narrated by Umar bin al-Khattab may Allah have mercy on him, “I heard the Messenger, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said “the most eminent of the subsequent followers [*Khayru at-Tabi’in*] is a man called Uwais. He has a mother to whom he is kind. He has a white spot. Ask him to seek forgiveness for you.”

They said Uwais was the lowest of man. He looked after the sheep for others and lived alone in the outback for an extended period. While they, their miserable life, and those who did not know where he is in their mishmash

At the peak of Ascetism [Zuhud]

According to Alqama bin Yazid, may Allah have mercy on him, who said, “Ascetism [*Zuhud*] reached its peak with eight eminent followers, amongst them Uwais al-Qarani. His people thought he had turned mad and they built him a hut at the entrance of their homestead, whereby many years would pass without them seeing his face. He picked up fallen dates for provision and food. At dusk, he would sell them to buy himself some food to break his fast [*iftar*].”

When Umar bin al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, became the leader [*Khalifa*] he said in the season of pilgrimage, “O people stand up.” So, they all stood up. Then he (Umar) said, “Sit down except those from Yemen.” Others sat. Then he (Umar) said, “Sit down except those people from Murad.” The others sat down. Then he (Umar) said, “Sit down except those who come from Qaran.” Others sat down except for one man, and he was Uwais’s uncle.

Umar, may Allah be pleased with him asked him, “Are you from Qaran?” The man said, “Yes.” (Then Umar asked) “Do you know

Uwais?” He (the man) said, “Why do you ask about him, O Amir al-Mu’uminin? In the name of Allah, there is none more stupid, insane and hungrier than him.” Umar, may Allah be pleased with him wept and then said, “It is you and not him! For I heard the Messenger, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said, “a few of groups of people [*Rabi’ah*] and the unwholesome [*Mudhar*] will enter Paradise by virtue of his intercession.”

More narration about Uwais

Ammar bin Yusof Al-Dabbiy narrated that a man asked Uwayis al-Qarani, “How are you this morning?” He (Uwais) replied, “I have reached the morning loving Allah, and the evening praising and thanking Allah. What for you ask about the condition of a man who when he reaches the morning is not certain that he will reach the evening, and when Uwais reaches the evening, is not certain that he will reach the morning. Indeed, death and its reflection have left no delight for a believer. The rights and obligation of a Muslim towards Allah, the Exalted, do not demand on him a wealth of either silver or gold. Enjoining good and forbidding evil has left no friend for a Muslim. We encouraged them to do good deeds, yet they sullied our reputation. They would find collaborators in that from among the wicked until by Allah. They went as far as accusing me of abominations.” “In the name of Allah, I shall not cease to stand amongst them for the sake of Allah and call for Allah’s right.” Then he (Uwais) went on his way and left me (the man).”

Haram bin Hayyan, may Allah have mercy on him said, “The story of Uwais reached me, and I set out for Kufah. I set my heart to look for him and him only. I found him sitting on the bank of the Euphrates at noon. He was doing his ablution. I recognised him by the description given to me of a man, emaciated, very dark, dusty, shaven head, awe-inspiring. I said greetings [*salam*] to him. He answered my greetings and looked at me. I stretched out my hand to shake hands with him, and he refused to shake hands with me.”

In my opinion, the cheerlessness of Uwais, may Allah be pleased with him in his shabbiness, unkemptness, aloofness, the insanity which the ignorant have imputed upon him, in the coarseness, and other

characteristics of the circumstances of the path. These are the most evident proof of the Folks who tread his Path, the genuinely poor, indifferent to the critics which claim that they contradict the *Sunnah*; they do not know that the most sublime *Sunnah* is renunciation of the world, turning one's back to men and devoting oneself entirely to the Lord, the Exalted, the Most-High.

Uwais with Haram bin Haiyan

Haram continued, "I said, may Allah show you mercy, O Uwais, and may He also forgive you. How are you? I (Haram) stared in shocked (at the condition of Uwais) brought out tears of love and kindness to him, and they choked me. I wept, and so did he." Then he (Uwais) answered: "And you too. May Allah greet you, O Haram bin Haiyan! How are you and how did you know about me?" Replied Haram, "(the One that showed you to me is) Allah." Uwais quickly responded with, "'There is no God but Allah', 'Glory to our Lord'. Indeed what our Lord has promised it has been fulfilled."

I (Haram) then asked, "Where did you learn of my name and the name of my father, when we have not met each other before?" He (Uwais) answered, "He, Who knows and is well acquainted (with all things), told me, and my soul got acquainted with yours to the extent that myself talked with yourself. Verily, the believers know one another and love one another by the grace of Allah's soothing Mercy, even if they had not met, and their homes are far apart."

I (Haram) said, "Tell me (a hadith), may Allah show you mercy, about the Messenger, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him. He (Uwais) said, "Indeed, I have not seen the Messenger of Allah's, nor did I had the pleasure of his companionship! By my father and mother, O Messenger of Allah! I have met people who had seen him, and some of his hadith have reached me, but I do not like to open myself to this door that will make me a specialist in hadith [*Muhaddith*], or a judge [*Qadhi*] or a Mufti. I have an all-absorbing pre-occupation inside myself and do not have the time to be involved with man's affairs."

I (Haram) said, “O my brother, recite verses from the Book of Allah so that I may hear them from you. Give me religious advice [wasi’at] which I may learn by heart for I love you because of Allah.”

He took me by the hand and said, “I took refuge in Allah, the All-Hearing, the Knower, against the banished Satan. Says my Lord and the most-true word is the words of my Lord, and the true speech is the speech of my Lord.” Then he recited,

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الْعِيبَ. مَا خَلَقْنَا هُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَكِنْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ. إِنَّ يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ مِيقَاتُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ. يَوْمَ لَا يُغْنِي مَوْلَى عَنْ مَوْلَى شَيْئًا وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ. إِلَّا مَنْ رَحِمَ اللَّهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ.

“We created not the heavens, the earth, and all between them, merely in (idle) sport; We created them not except for ends: but most of them do not understand. Verily the Day of Sorting Out is the time appointed for all of them, The Day when no protector can avail his client in aught, and no help can they receive, except such as receive Allah’s Mercy: for He is Exalted in Might, Most Merciful.”¹

Then Awais took a long deep breath and collapsed. I thought he had fainted. (But later he got up) and said, “O son of Haiyan: your father, Haiyan, died and you are also about to die, leading your way after that to Paradise or Hell. Your father Adam has also died and so has your mother Hawa, O son of Haiyan. Nuh, the prophet of Allah, also died. Ibrahim, the Friend of Allah, also died. Musa, the intimate speaker and friend unto Allah, also died. David, the caliph of Allah, also died. Muhammad also died, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him and all prophets. Abu Bakar, the caliph of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him also died. My brother and friend, Umar bin al-Khattab also died!”

I (Haram) said to him, “May Allah show mercy upon you! Umar has not died.” Uwais said, “Indeed, the announcement of his (Umar’s) death was given to me by my Lord, and that of my death was announce to me, you and I are amongst the group about to die.” Then he invoked

¹ Surah 44 ad-Dukhan Verse 38 – 42.

the blessings upon the Prophet may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him and made short supplications.

Uwais's advise to Haram

Then he said, "This is my religious counsel [*wasi'at*] to you. Devote yourself to the book of Allah. Forever remember the death of the Prophets and the death of the virtues believers. Remember death every second of your life, warn your folk when you return to them (of death), and counsel the general population [*ummah*] (that they too will die).

Beware: do not part with the majority [*jama'a*], lest by doing so you unconsciously part from your religion and enter hell. Supplicate Allah for yourself and me."

Then Uwais said, "O Lord, this man says he loves me and has visited me for Your sake. May You enable me to recognise his face in Paradise and may You grant me that he visits me in Your Abode, the Abode of Peace [*Darus -Salam*]. Protect him as long as he lives, and make him content with any little supply. Grant that he becomes among the grateful for what You bestow him of your grace, and reward him with good on my behalf."

Then Uwais said, "Peace, the mercy of Allah and His blessings be upon you, and I shall not see you after this day, may Allah show you mercy, you seek me, and verily I am averse to fame and inclined to solitude because I am anxious so long as I am alive among the people."

"Do not ask about me nor look for me. Know that you are in my heart even if we do not see each other. Supplicate for me to Allah. Indeed, I will supplicate Allah for you and remember you by the will of Allah, the Exalted. Take this path, and I will take this."

Haram narrated: "I wanted to walk with him for a while, but he refused. Then I parted company with him, with both of us in tears!

I kept looking at him until he entered a narrow road. Then I asked about him after that and looked for him, but I did not find anyone who would tell me about him, except that I used to see him in my dreams once or twice a week."

More reports about Uwais

Asbagh may Allah have mercy on him informed that: “Uwais may Allah be pleased with him, used to say upon the onset of the evening, “This is the night of bowing [*rukuu*’] and he will go into pray until dawn break. He would say that this is the night of prostration [*sujud*] and go into prostration until daybreak. When evening sets in, he used to give to charity [*sadaqa*] out of whatever he had in his house, food and clothing. Then he would say, “O Lord, for whosoever, dies of hunger, condemn me not, and for whosoever dies naked, condemn me not.”

an-Nadhr bin Shumail¹ may Allah have mercy on him, narrated that, “Uwais used to pick bits and pieces of bread from refuse heaps, clean them out, give some as charity [*sadaqa*] and eat some and would then say: “O Lord, I acquit myself before you in respect of those with famished stomach.”

Abdullah bin Salamah, may Allah have mercy on him narrated that, “We went on a military expedition to Azerbaijan during the time of Umar bin al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him and Uwais al-Qarani was with us. When we returned he fell ill so we carried him, his resistance ebbed away, and he died. We alighted only to find that a grave has been dug, water, camphor and shroud ready. We washed him and put him into a shroud, we prayed on him and left. (During the journey) Someone reminded us that we did not identify his grave’, so we returned and yet once we arrived back no trace of the grave was there.”

Abdul Rahman bin Abu Laila may Allah have mercy on him narrated that, “On the day of the battle of Shiffin a man shouted, “Is Uwais al-Qarani among the folk?” He was found among the dead companions of Ali, may Allah honor him, and have mercy on all of them, Allah knows best.” Here ends the quote from al-Yafii with few omissions, may Allah the Exalted show him mercy.

¹ an-Nadhr bin Shumail bin Kharsyah Al-Mazini At-Tamimi, a well known personality in Islamic history and a learned in Hadith and Arabic language. He was born in Marwu from Khurasan, met Khalifah al-Ma'mun from the Abbasiyah Dynasty and was honoured by them. Passed away in Marwu in 203H.

Other Wali Allah

Zin-Nun al-Masri¹ may Allah have mercy on him narrated, “Once when I was on the coast of Sham, a woman approached. I asked: ‘Where are you from?’ She said: ‘From men whom neither bartering nor selling diverts them from the remembrance of Allah.’ Then I asked her: ‘Where are you going?’ and she said: ‘To men whose sides shunned from beds’. I told her to describe them to me.” She began to recite:

“(They are) folks whose ambitions is to be with Allah

To him alone their high aspirations aspire

The quest of this people is direct solely to their Sire and Lord

O best of a quest is for the One and Only One, the Absolute,

They are not overtaken by the haggles for earthly matters nor its honour

Not even for food, pleasures and leisure nor children,

Nor clothes no matter how distinguished and elegant,

Natural delight, a fanfare of the towns is no happiness for them,

(You will find them) like hostages in the creeks but intimacy,

You will find them with their friends on mountain tops

The Pious facing death

Someone informed Al-Junaid, may Allah have mercy on him, “Verily, Abu Said al-Kharraz² was always in ecstasy on the approach of his death.” He responded: “That situation is no surprise because his soul cannot wait to soar up in longing for Allah, the Exalted, the Most-High.”

In that state, he used to recite the following verse:

The savants’ heart long (for Allah) during the invocations’ bliss

In their secret intimate converse evokes a memory

¹ He is Abul Faidh, Tsauban bin Ibrahim Al-Mashri Al-Ikhmimi, his father was from the Nubi clan. He was slender built and Caucasian skin. He passed away on 245H. Those accompanied his funeral saw a flock of green birds flying above the jenazah until it reached the graveyard.

² His full name is Abu Said Ahmad bin Isa Al-Kharraz from Baghdad. He was considered a leading Imam and Professor. It was reported that he was the first to introduce the science of death [fana`] and the hereafter [baqa`]. He passed in 279H.

To them have cups of death been brought
 Oblivious to the world like a man intoxicated
 Their concerns wheeled around entering the encampment
 They love Allah intimately like the celestials spheres stars
 Their passionate love of him killed their physical self on earth,
 And their soul concealed and soared higher freely,
 Not contended are they, except when intimate with their Beloved
 Nor deviated, even when misery and harm befall them

On the eve of the death of al-Junaid may Allah have mercy on him, came Abu Muhammad al-Jariri¹ may Allah have mercy on him, who asked him, “Do you need anything?” He said, “Yes. When I die, wash me and put me in a shroud and perform the prayer of the dead upon me.” al-Jariri cried, and people around him cried too. Then al-Junaid said, “Another thing.” He (Al-Jariri) asked: “What is it?” Al-Junaid said, “You will prepare a banquet for our companions. So, when the funeral is over, they will come back, lest they will scatter about.” al-Jariri cried. Then he (al-Jariri) said, “In the name of Allah if were we to lose these two eyes, we shall not have two such eyes ever again amongst us.” Abu Ja’afar al-Firghani commented that the events were just like that (as al-Junaid requested) after the death of al-Junaid, that the meetings took place by virtue of the blessings [*barakah*] of the Sheikh (al-Junaid) may Allah have mercy on him.

al-Jariri may Allah have mercy on him, said, “There used to be a sick (man) neighbour of al-Junaid living in a dilapidated place. When al-Junaid, may Allah have mercy on him, died and we came back from the burial, we visited the sick man and found that he had moved to a higher place. Then he said to me, ‘O Abu Muhammad, you see me going back to that dilapidated place, after having lost this Sayyid.’

Then he recited,

¹ His full name is Abu Muhammad Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Al-Husain Al-Jariri. He was a close companion of Al-Junaid. He was asked to replace Al-Junaid upon his death because of his complete knowledge of various sciences and true path. He passed away in 311H.

What grief to part with such a folk!

They are like the beacons and indeed castles,

(They are) towns, rain-clouds and unshakable mountains (steady),

(They are) the richness (of the land), its peace and serenity

No change for us - the nights (were just as peaceful and serene)

Until death did (come to take) us apart

For every ember (smoking), there must be a fire (its heart to start),

For every running stream of water, there must be a source.

Then Abu Muhammad al-Jariri said, “The sick man disappeared, and that is the last I saw of him”. May Allah show mercy to all of them.

Some learned [*ulama*] said, “We saw al-Imam al-Ghazali, may Allah have mercy on him in the deserts. He had put on a patchy garment [*muraqqa*], and holding a staff (walking stick) and on the other hand, a leather drinking vessel. I said to him, “O Imam, is not lecturing in Baghdad better than this (solitude journey)?” He looked at me sternly (in anger) and said, “When the moon of felicity (happiness) [*as saadah*] began to rise on the orbit of Divine Will (desires), and the sun of the essence of (peak) attainment bursts forth”.

As in the following theme:

I give up Laila’s love and part away from Su’da’s,

Thus returned to the place I am first associated with,

The yearnings urged me gently away from the market place, for these are

The stations of they whom you love, gently, O gently alight.

Amir al- Mu’uminin, Ali, may Allah ennoble his face, characterised the men of Allah, his caliphs on earth among his servants of Allah by saying, “They are few, who are graced with positions in Allah’s presence. By virtue of them, Allah defends his arguments until they convey them to their opponents and plant them in their hearts of those like them. With knowledge, they have assaulted the essence of things and they came to regard as easy what would be considered not as such by the rich, and found bliss in what the ignorant find dreary. They

went through the hustle and bustle of the world only with their bodies but their hearts hugged to the Sublime setting.

They are the vice-regent of Allah in His lands and His callers to His religion. Ah! Ah! How I long to see them?”

May Allah, the Exalted, be pleased with him and with them together. And may He grant that they benefit us as well as all Muslims.

أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ.

“They are the party of Allah. Truly it is the party of Allah which will achieve felicity.”¹

Such are the elect of Allah, as mentioned in the verse above.



¹ End of Surah 58 Mujadalah Verse 22.

Chapter Three

The Third Category

دَعْوَةُ الْأَمْرَاءِ وَالسَّلَاطِينِ وَوَلَاةُ أُمُورِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

A Call to the Emirs, Sultans, Kings Those presiding in authority

They are the Emirs, Sultans, Kings, the Government in power and those in authorities over Muslims, a word of counsel, admonition, reminding and caution for them.

Be informed that authorities are necessarily indispensable. It is also a grave matter to be in authority, as governors are in great danger, and this is because when they uphold the bounden duty of fulfilling Allah's rights and the rights of His servants, they suffer weariness and distress. They expose themselves to ruin and destruction when they neglect it. The Messenger, may blessings and peace be upon him said,

كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ.

“Each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is countable for his flock.”

The Messenger may blessings and peace be upon him said,

إِنَّكُمْ سَتَحْرِصُونَ عَلَى الْإِمَارَةِ، وَلِئِنَّهَا سَتَكُونُ نَدَامَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

“Verily, you will lust for the sovereignty (power), and it will verily be the source of regret on the Day of Judgement.”

The Messenger may blessings and peace be upon him said,
 اللَّهُمَّ مَنْ وَلِيَ مِنْ أَمْرِ أُمَّتِي شَيْئًا، فَشَقَّ عَلَيْهِمْ فَاشْفُقْ عَلَيْهِ. وَمَنْ وَلِيَ مِنْ أَمْرِ أُمَّتِي شَيْئًا،
 فَرَفَقَ بِهِمْ فَارْفُقْ بِهِمْ فَارْفُقْ بِهِ.

“O Lord, among my people [*ummah*] whoever is given authority over anything, and he becomes harsh with people, be harsh with him; and whoever is given authority over anything in my people, and treats people gently, treat him gently.”

The Messenger may blessings and peace be upon him said,
 مَا مِنْ وَالٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ إِلَّا جِيَءَ بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَعْلُولَةً يَدَاهُ إِلَى عُنُقِهِ، فَكَهُ عَذْلُهُ أَوْ أَوْبَقَهُ جَوْرُهُ.
 “Whoever taking authority over people will be brought on the Day of Judgement with his two hands tied to his neck, then his (own) justice will set him free, or his tyranny will put him to ruin.”

He, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,
 لَيُؤَدَّنَ رَجُلًا لَوْ أَنَّ ذَوَائِبَهُمْ مُعَلَّقَةً بِالثَّرِيَّا وَلَمْ يَلُؤُوا مِنْ أَمْرِ النَّاسِ شَيْئًا.
 “There are those in authority who dream that their forelocks were hung to the *Pleiades* star, yet they will never exercise any rule over mankind.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,
 كَمْ مِنْ مُتَحَوِّضٍ فِي مَالِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ لَهُ النَّارُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.
 “Many are those who plunge into the wealth of Allah, the Exalted, unjustly, and they have the fire set for themselves duly in the Day of Judgement.”

Those in Office Must Assess Himself

Indeed, according to the Quran and the Sunnah [*warid*], there is severe and frightening penalty awaiting whosoever is given authority over a people and fails to execute his office with justice and equity and does not avoid injustice and tyranny. For this reason, people who fear Allah [*Taqwa*] has distanced themselves from authority and the assiduous strivers, who live in awe for fear of their Lord, fled from it. And whoever amongst them got tested and could not help it, and he lived in fear, anxiety, caution and vigilance.

Umar bin al-Khattab was a Good Example

Umar bin al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, for all his commitment to absolute justice and extreme precaution, yet still used to say, “Who will take it wholly (that is an authority)? I wish I will barely get saved from it with nothing against or for me.” Such was his fear lest he would neglect the affairs of the Muslims and so strenuous was his attention for his responsibility to them that a doze while sitting was all the sleep he could get and he used to say, “If I sleep during the day I will neglect the affairs of Muslims and if I sleep at night, I will neglect myself. So how can I sleep between these two!”

Ali was Another Good Example

When there was an accumulation of wealth at the treasury [*Baitul-Mal*], Ali, may Allah honour him, would call on the Muslims to distribute its content amongst them without leaving a single *dirham*. Then he would order the place be swept and sprinkled with water. After that, he would perform prayers over it. He remarked, “In as much as the treasury [*Baitul-Mal*] witness me gathering wealth, it also witnesses my prayers in it.”

A Lesson from Umar bin Abdul Aziz

When Umar bin Abdul Aziz, may Allah be pleased with him, was appointed the caliph [*Khalifa*] many cries were heard from inside his house. When inquired about that, people were told that the cries came from his best wives and maidens. He said to them that henceforth he would not be able to be intimate with them. He gave them a choice between staying and going. He said, “My attention has been taken away from you on account of responsibilities entrusted to me for the affairs of the Muslims.” They chose to stay with him. It is recorded that he did not wash from the major ritual impurity [*Jandba*] for the entire duration of his caliphate except on two occasions. The period of his caliphate was two and a half years.¹

¹ Umar bin Abdul Aziz held the Caliphate from 99H to 101H.

Once, he wanted to bathe. A large copper bottle was brought containing hot water. The weather was severely cold. So he asked, “How the water boiled?” They told him that it was boiled in the public kitchen. He refused to bathe with it and wanted to bathe with cold water. The servant told him: “If you washed with this cold water, the people would wake up without a caliph, (that is, he will die of severe cold)”. He said, “What do I do when this water is not permissible for me?” The servant told him: “You will estimate the equivalent money value of the firewood used for boiling this amount of water and put it into the Muslims Treasury [Baitul-Mal].” He proceeded with the estimation and returned the value to the treasury.

The Rightly Guided Caliphs

There are many lessons we can follow in the biographies of the rightly guided caliphs, which are well-known and widely circulated anecdotes. It will be too long to discuss here. All of which is not possible for us to adopt or practise in full except particularly for the four rightly guided caliphs, namely Abu Bakar ash-Siddiq, Umar al-Faruq, Uthman ash-Shahid and Ali Murtadha, may Allah be pleased with them all.

The tenure of their caliphates was the period about which the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,
 إِنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ بَدَأَ نُبُوءَةً وَرَحْمَةً، ثُمَّ يَكُونُ مُلْكًا عَضُوضًا.

“This Order began as a Prophethood and mercy, and then followed by the acrimonious government.”

The Messenger may blessings and peace be upon him said,

الْخِلَافَةُ بَعْدِي ثَلَاثُونَ سَنَةً.

“The Caliphates after me will be for thirty years.”

Now, this was the period which took in the tenures of the four caliphates plus the days of the caliphate of al-Hasan bin Ali, the grandchild of the Rasullullah may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him. Al-Hasan’s Caliphate lasted for about six months to complete thirty years of caliphates from the time of death of the Rasullullah may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him until the reconciliation made between

al-Hasan bin Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, with Mu'awiyah bin Abi Sufyan thus giving the latter the oath of allegiance after he saw what he saw (that was the division among the Muslims) and discerned what he discerned, that was the promised made by his grandfather, the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him became evident to him, may Allah be pleased with him.

Just as he may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

إِنَّ ابْنِي هَذَا سَيِّدٌ، وَلَعَلَّ اللَّهَ أَنْ يُصْلِحَ بِهِ بَيْنَ فِئَتَيْنِ عَظِيمَتَيْنِ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ.

“This child of mine is a leader [*sayyid*], and it may well be the case that by virtue of him Allah will reconcile between two great peoples amongst Muslims.”

Never again a Period of Justice

There has never been in the history of Islam similar period as from the time of the death of Rasullullah may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, to this period or an epoch either closely or remotely resembling the era of the rightly and righteously guided Caliphs on the grounds of prevalence of justice and benevolence, eradication of tyranny and excesses, establishment of truth and religion and fighting against unbelievers and foes. Their incumbency covered thirty years and these are the thirty years prescribed in the hadith highlighted by the Prophet may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him

Admittedly, the virtuous caliph Umar bin Abdul Aziz al-Umawi may Allah be pleased with him, strictly adhered to their conduct, but the tenure of his caliphate was short. From people in general and members of his family in particular, he encountered difficulties, tribulations and sufferings, because the people's desires were away from the epochs of justice and the establishment of the truth.

That was from the time of reconciliation and oath of allegiance between al-Hasan bin Ali and Mu'awiyah, may Allah be pleased with them, to the appointment of Umar bin Abdul Aziz as a caliph. That comes to about sixty years during which most practices of justice have disappeared; tyranny and deviation from righteousness have taken place.

It was acutely painful for Umar bin Abdul Aziz, may Allah be pleased with him, to bring them back to what used to obtain during the times if the rightly guided Caliphates, may Allah be pleased with them all.

Regrets of Umar bin Abdul Aziz

Indeed, things came to such a pass that Umar bin Abdul Aziz asked some virtuous servants of Allah to supplicate that he soon dies. Because then the affairs of men became extremely difficult to handle, and it was burdensome for him to establish the truth and justices as they were. In these circumstances, he chose death and the transfer to the Hereafter, which is better and everlasting, and this was not because of impatience and disgust but rather out of fear and concern lest he should be faced with tyranny and suppression by those who hate the commandment of Allah, the Exalted, who hate the establishment of justice amongst His servants and those who eat people's wealth in vanities. So he feared lest there should be civil strife, disaffection, dispute and differences. He preferred what is with Allah than such an unbearable experience.

Ali Faced the Same Faith

In this regards, Amirul Mu'uminin Ali bin Abi Talib, may Allah honour him, had earlier experienced a similar situation when the people of Iraq rose against him, and he saw their sluggishness to defend the truth and justice, and strive against companions of evil. Matters came to such a degree that he has been heard saying, "O Lord! Relieve me of them and relieve them of me."

He then saw the Rasullullah may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, in a dream and complained to him about dissension and disunity which have befallen the *ummah* (people). Then he may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said, "Supplicate to Allah regarding them." And Ali may Allah honour him invoked, "O Lord change them for me into a better people than they are, and grant them a person who is worse than me."

Now, when news of the death of Umar bin Abdul Aziz, may Allah be pleased with him, reached the Roman king, he became very distressed, and he praised him.

He concluded by saying: “But then people of virtue do not survive amongst people of vice except a little” or so he said.

No Government Will Uphold Justice Ever Again

After the caliphates of the four caliphs, may Allah be pleased with them, and that of Umar bin Abdul Aziz, may Allah be pleased with him, there is not a single leader who will uphold the virtuous and steadfast conduct, neither among the *Bani Umayya* nor the *Bani ‘Abbas*. Yet the *Bani Umayya* strikingly showed more significant dereliction in respect of the commandment of Allah and more considerable laxity in the observance of His sanctities and lesser veneration for His signs than *Bani ‘Abbas*. Between the two, there exist vast differences and disagreement. To Allah, the Supreme in glory is the return of all and to Him is their account, and He knows well all that they do, and He the Exalted will repay them for their past deeds and says,

وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ.

“And soon will the unjust assailants know what vicissitudes their affairs will take!”¹

Endeavour to Follow the Leaders Who Uphold Fairness

When it has become impracticable or hard for anyone presiding in authority over an affair of Muslims to adhere to the conduct of the people of justice and beneficence, who shun the injustice and transgression, it is incumbent upon the eager for the good pleasure of his Lord and His reward, and who fear His wrath and penalty, to pattern themselves on the Imams of justice and fairness in all that they do and say. They should do that employing all their available resources, without the following whim and showing preference to the Here-and-Now instead of the Hereafter. At the very least, his conduct in all his affairs needs to be closer to the just and kind rulers than to tyrant, arrogant, unjust and animus rulers. He needs to confess his shortfall and be fearful and concerned about his destiny on account of his confusion and short deliveries. He must have

¹ Surah 26 ash-Shu'araa Verse 227.

no delusions about his Lord nor be wrapped up in self-glory. Neither is he to imagine or dream that he is in the company of rulers of justice and fairness. In that way, he would probably emerge into safety and salvation, even if salvation and security are the most remote and the most scarce to rulers of these times and eras.

The Evil Harvest

Many such leaders have inevitably fallen prey to self-love and been overwhelmed with their illusion about their deed to the Lord despite their ugly conduct and evil, horrible acts, and this stems from the deadly deception which the devils spin on them, and also from his wicked fraud and subtle lies, which lead them to their ruin. For if they witness their deficiency, acknowledged their confusion, and confessed their failure to discharge Allah's binding obligations and to fulfil the rights of the subjects who are Allah's servants and whose affairs Allah has placed in their hands, then they would return to Him and repent from what they are doing seeking the forgiveness of their Lord on account of their sins, and this is the least they should do in this regard.

Those in Authority must be Mindful of the Religion

Among the most critical and urgent matters to anyone given authority over the affairs of Muslims is to have an insight into religion. He, therefore, has to learn the science of faith [*Iman*] and Islam. That way, he gets to know what acts of obedience Allah has made obligatory upon him, what sins Allah has forbidden, what divine duties towards Allah, the Exalted. What are his mission over whom he has authority, have been ordained upon him. Indeed, the learned [*'alim*] is the one who knows that and accordingly guides others, whereas the ignorant is borne to every evil and every dereliction of the sacred duty while the ignorance is ugly to everyone, but it is even more obnoxious and more evil in the case of leaders of people and those in positions of power for they act not only on their behalf but also on behalf of others at the same time.

Furthermore, a ruler needs to be the most eager person to establish the obligations of Allah, the Exalted, always avoid His prohibitions and uphold the institutions of His religion and His sanctities.

He must order his subjects and urge them to do so as well. For Allah, the Exalted has not accorded him authority over them except to establish amongst them His religion and uphold such acts of obedience and sanctities as by Him commanded and to avoid such acts of disobedience as by Him pronounced. As for matters of daily life which revolve around the ruler, they come second after establishing the religion and the commands of Allah, the Exalted among His servant.

The Ruler's Imperative

It is incumbent upon a ruler to eagerly abolish abominations and efface their effects and to give no quarter to anyone who wants to bring them out into the open. As for whoever brings atrocities into the public, the ruler should reprimand him most severely and punish him most harshly, in accordance to what the sacred *Shari'ah* has laid down or according to the state policy as by *Shari'ah* inspired, and by considering each crime or case on its own merits.

It is also incumbent upon the ruler to carry out such penalties as Allah, the Exalted, has ordained upon his servants who committed a crime such as a penalty for drinking liquor, stealing, etc. Once the proof has been established and the evidence shown to be valid, he should not be derelict nor fall short of it. A Hadith states: "A penalty executed on earth is better for the people on earth than forty days worth of rainfall."

The importance of carrying out Allah's prescribed penalties against those who flout Allah's interdiction lies in the warning it sets for them and all other parties not to commit the obvious crimes and wrongdoings, not to continue it. In so doing it also corrects the behaviour of the wrongdoers and improve their conduct. Also, it instilled fear upon the transgressors into retreat, and restrain those who forsake the path, such that there is peace in public and for which the leader will be praise.

'Uthman bin Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, said, "Allah curbs through those in 'Authority' [*Sultan*] what He does not curb through the Qur'an" - meaning that there are those whom the Qur'an will stop from Allah's prohibitions, that is even if there is no authority, they are mindful of their duties to Allah, and their fear for Allah is sufficient

to stop them from abandoning Allah's bounden obligations upon them and restrain them from getting into what Allah has forbidden them or from seizing what does not belong to them. However, the majority of people are such that the fear of authority stops them from transgression and from arrogating to them, which by the *Shari'ah* they have no right. If not for fear of the whip or the sword and the like, they will not be restrained, nor will they be shepherded, so earthbound is their vision and day-to-day aspirations."

It has been said that: "the religion is the edifice's foundation, and the king the guard, and that which lacks in foundation tumbles into debris and that which has no guard dissipates." It has also been said that: "religion and kingship are twins".

Image and Metaphor

Now if the sultan, who fulfils the function of sovereignty, is just and virtuous, the brotherhood of this kingship to religion becomes sound and secure. On the contrary, if holding the title of sultan and enjoying prestige, pre-eminence over people, obedience to his command and lust for the world and its passions are the main motives, then the brotherhood of kingship to religion becomes unsound and not right. Instead, it just projects a negative image.

Usually, that is what happens in such an establish kingship while it should be mindful of its duties to the religion, and to safeguard the affairs of Muslims and to secure their lives and property. Then that is the legal norm of the steadfastness of kingship even though at its root any sound form of authority should be governed by the rules and guidance mentioned above.

So to understand better, reflect on his words, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, when he says, "Verily, Allah will aid this religion by the virtuous and the wicked", and according to another version "by a wicked man", and in another version "by a folk with no morals", and according to another version "by men who are not part of it."

The highest aspiration of most rulers in these times, as well as times, have gone by, is the acquisition of power in this world and the enjoyment of its desires. Yet connected to their government are many advantages, both religious and worldly, like the security of states and people, the overpowering of those doing mischief, injustice and transgression. Glory belongs to Allah, the All-Knowing and Wise, the Manager and Supreme. He, the Exalted says,

وَلَوْ لَا دَفَعُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ.

“If Allah did not check one set of people using another, the earth indeed would be full of mischief: but Allah is full of bounty to all the worlds.”¹

وَلَوْ لَا دَفَعُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ لَهْدَمَتِ صَوَامِعُ وَيَعٍ وَصَلَوَاتُ وَمَسَاجِدُ يُذَكَّرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ.

“Did not Allah check one set of people employing another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure. Allah will surely aid those who aid His cause; for verily, Allah is full of strength, Exalted in Might.”²

The situation generally applies to a different group, and it well deserves consideration of intention on the part of these defenders, who are either intent upon the Hereafter and the religion or intend upon the world, its power and immediate and fleeting passions. He, the Exalted then says,

قُلْ كُلٌّ يَعْمَلُ عَلَى شَاكِلَتِهِ فَرَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ هُوَ أَهْدَى سَبِيلًا.

“Everyone acts according to his disposition, but your Lord knows best who it is that is best guided on the Path.”³

Allah, Sublime is He, knows their deeds, sayings, and of course, the way they act reflects the underlying intention(s). The Exalted says,

¹ Surah 2 al-Baqara Verse 251.

² Surah 22 al-Hajj Verse 40.

³ Surah 17 al-Israa Verse 84.

وَرُبُّكَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ.

“And your Lord knows what they hide inside their chests what they reveal.”¹

It behoves a king (or the leader in authority), may Allah, the Exalted, give him capacity, to be compassionate and gracious where it is needed and with those who are in need; that is with the weak, needy, poor and oppressed. It also behoves him to show a degree of harshness and severity against the wrong-doers, the tyrants, the wicked and the wilful transgressors to instil fear in their hearts and curb their immoral conduct. In either case, both graciousness and severity are to be applied in proportion with the wide range of matters. That is all part of effective statesmanship, and the king, may Allah render him virtuous, needs to be conversant with its ins and outs.

Sound statesmanship with its proper knowledge is the hinge upon which state of affairs and the interests of subjects revolve. They are fruits of mature minds and ample knowledge. For this reason, none can best run a country without possession of full understanding, wit and patience. Again, for these reasons, only a few, rare individuals, both after Islam and *Jahiliyya*, were known as kings and sultans possessing these qualifications. Al-Imam al-Shafi’I, may Allah have mercy upon him, said, “Leadership of men is more difficult than leading animals.” That is absolutely, patently clear.

Leaders Must Be Virtuous and Desire for Good

It is incumbent upon the person with authority, may Allah endue him with virtue, to leave the door open so that he can be accessible by whoever wants to see him from those denied of their rights and those with needs. Then, he should do whatever he can personally; what the leader cannot because of more pressing matters and of greater interest to Muslims, they are entrusted to such a man among his Ministers and state aides whose competence and dedication to religion he trusts.

¹ Surah 28 al-Qasaa Verse 69

There should not be intermediaries between the leader and the people when the need arises, and he needs to appoint intermediaries or officers to fulfil the role, they should be people of virtue and religion, trustworthiness and well-guarded reputation. His intermediaries and ministers reflect the status of the authority. If the intermediaries are virtuous and trustworthy, they will communicate, between the leaders and his people the situations as they are, accurately without any change, exaggeration or water down. If they are wicked, mischievous and treacherous, then they will communicate things as their whims suggest and according to their mischievous motives. The affairs thus become misrepresented, and chaos takes place. The people would attribute what comes from them - whether deemed good or bad - to the King (authority). Let those in power be on maximum guard and alert against evil and wicked intermediaries and officers of the government.

Leadership Must Strives for Excellence

It is also incumbent upon him, may Allah aid him, to reveal his utmost desire for good and obedience to Allah, the establishment of His command among his people, and the love for justice and equity, and the aversion of injustice and tyranny. In this way his aides want to be close to him, follow his right actions likewise and put these traits into practice, and report to the leader the definite trend as he sees it, as he will love to uphold such office doing good and benevolence service to the state. For it had been said: “Leadership is like a market place. Such goods as can fetch a customer are the ones who go there”, meaning: that if he is known to be inclined to what is right, just and virtuous, his aides will frequently talk about that in his presence, and they will seek to draw close to him by following the same track. As can be observed in real life, if he is known for the opposite, they will follow suit and conform to his taste and bent. A similar saying goes: “Men adhere to the creed of their kings.”

Now, if one of the intermediaries and employees displays sincerity and trustworthiness and competence, the sultan should draw him close, honour and promote him. If otherwise is shown, such as being treacherous and derelict in his duties, the sultan should warn and

admonish him against such misconduct. If he becomes restraint, so much the better, otherwise he should demote, dismiss and banish him for indeed there is no good in insincere, treacherous and neglectful people. Indeed they are the reason for the ruining of the kingdom, destruction of a nation and the attraction of enemies.

Choosing a Wise Minister

The king or leadership may Allah aid him, should appoint a wise, virtuous and sincere Minister as a hadith narrated,

إِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِالْأَمِيرِ خَيْرًا جَعَلَ لَهُ وَزِيرًا صَالِحًا، إِنْ نَسِيَ ذَكَرَهُ، وَإِنْ ذَكَرَ أَعَانَهُ. وَإِذَا أَرَادَ بِهِ شُوءًا جَعَلَ لَهُ وَزِيرًا غَيْرَ صَالِحٍ، إِنْ نَسِيَ لَمْ يَذْكُرْهُ، وَإِنْ ذَكَرَ لَمْ يُعِنْهُ.

“When Allah wishes well for a prince [*amir*] (a leaders), He bestows upon him a virtuous minister who reminds when he forgets and helps when the leader remembers, and when Allah wishes him ill, Allah bestows upon him a non-virtuous minister who, when the leader forgets, does not remind him, when the leader remembers, does not help him.”

A man in authority should guard against injustice because it is the germ of destruction, the source of corruption, the root of ruin and devastation. When he gets notorious for that and the news spreads, his people become disaffected with him and desert him. They would ask for his downfall and death. Their tongues never stop abuse and curse him. Indeed, he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

خَيْرُ أُمَرَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ تُحِبُّونَهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَكُمْ، وَتُصَلُّونَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيُصَلُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ. وَشَرُّ أُمَرَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ تُبْغِضُونَهُمْ وَيُبْغِضُونَكُمْ، وَتَلْعَنُونَهُمْ وَيَلْعَنُونَكُمْ.

“The best of your authorities are those you love and who love you, and you supplicate (to Allah) for them, and they supplicate (to Allah) for you. And the worst of your authorities are those you hate, and they hate you. You curse them, and they curse you.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, also said,

يَدُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْأَمِيرِ مَا لَمْ يَجْزْ، فَإِذَا جَارَ رَفَعَ اللَّهُ يَدَهُ.

“The hand of Allah is on the one in authority as long as he does not act tyrannically. Once he acts tyrannically, Allah lifts His hand off him.”

Allah, the Exalted, says, وَأَمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَكَانُوا لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا.

“But those who swerve (deviate) - they are (but) fuel for Hell-fire.”¹

al-Qasitun are those who deviate, whereas *al-Muqsitun* are those people of justice and fairness.

It is Prohibited to Take Properties By Force

The king, may Allah endue him with righteousness, should know that it is unlawful for him to take the wealth and property of Muslims, be it in small or large quantities and that the taxes charged upon them, be they by way of duty, excise and levy are all part of obscene injustice and unseemly departure from righteousness. The king should know that what is lawful for him and his aides are such assets that have no definite owner, legacies which have no heir, and the poll tax [*jizya*] received from free non-Muslim [*ahli-Dh-dhimmah*] and similar properties.

In the Book of the Lawful and the Unlawful in “*Ihya’ Ulumiddin*” Hujjatul Islam Imam al-Ghazali, may Allah have mercy on him has given a full account of the source of revenue for the king’s exchequer and counted them as being ten in number.

The Authority Must Avoid Wastage and Spendthrift

It is also incumbent upon him, may Allah endue him with righteousness, to avoid extravagance and the tendency to squander so that he may not have to confiscate Muslims’ private possessions when Allah, the Exalted, gave him sovereignty and authority over them so that he may secure them, their property and may protect them from the unjust and the trespassers. If it is he who seizes their properties unlawfully, who will then stand guard and ward off trespassers as he has become the trespasser and the neglectful guard? There is no strength, nor resource except in Allah, the Exalted and Supreme (in glory).

¹ Surah 72 al Jin Verse 15.

It is also incumbent upon the person in authority, may Allah endue him with righteousness, to be most eager in protecting the oppressed and the wronged, and to stand up for the weak until he takes his right from the wrongdoers. In this, he should try his best.

He should give sincere advice to his subjects, paying every effort to protect and defend them. He should neither defraud them, covet what they have nor wish much of it for him.

He should wish for them what he wants for himself and dislike for them such evil that he despises for himself. He should do his utmost to extend the benefit to them and remove harm both in their religious affairs and their day-to-day life. Verily it is for that purpose that Allah, the Exalted, has appointed him as referred to in a hadith which narrated as,

أَيُّمَا وَالٍ وَلِيَ وَلَمْ يَحْطُ رَعِيَّتَهُ بِالنَّصِيحَةِ إِلَّا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ.

“No governor who is given authority over a people and fails to give them sincere service except that Allah will deny Paradise to him.”

The Subject's Responsibility

As long as the person in authority is right and kind in governing and sound in his conduct, it becomes the duty of the subjects to help him and praise him for the good he does. However, when he is wicked and confused, it becomes their duty to supplicate to Allah that He may endue him with righteousness and capacity for virtue and steadfastness on the straight path. They should not occupy their tongues with abusing and cursing him. That adds to his wickedness and corruptness and it will have dire results for them. Al-Fudhail, may Allah have mercy on him, said: “If I had a supplication that will be granted, I would only invoke it for the Leader [*Imam*] because when Allah endues him with righteousness, both subjects and state are secure.” It was recorded in some ancient documents [*Athar*] that Allah, the Exalted, says,

أَنَا الْمَلِكُ وَقُلُوبُ الْمَلِكِ بِيَدِي فَمَنْ أَطَاعَنِي جَعَلْتُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ نِعْمَةً وَمَنْ عَصَانِي جَعَلْتُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ نِقْمَةً. فَلَا تُشْغِلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ بِسَبِّ الْمُلُوكِ. وَسَلُونِي أَعْطِفْ قُلُوبَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ.

“I am the Sovereign King, and the hearts of kings are in my hands. Whosoever obeys Me, I will make such kings a bounty to him and whoever disobeys Me I will make them a disaster. Do not busy yourselves with abusing kings, instead supplicate to Me that I may soften their hearts to you.” Such is the quote from the ancient document [Athar].

When the Messenger, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, mentioned tyrannical authorities, the companions asked him: “Do not we wage war upon them, O Messenger of Allah?” He s.a.w says: “No, as long as they establish prayers amongst you.” And he says, “If they act beneficently, it is in your favour and theirs, and if they act ill it is for you and against them.” Another hadith narration mentioned,

أَدُّوا الَّذِي عَلَيْكُمْ وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي لَكُمْ.

“Discharge such obligations as set upon you, and supplicate to Allah to grant what is for you.”

Indeed, he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, prohibits their waging war against tyrants because of the repercussions of dissension and general calamities which befall people and cause the loss of life and limb and property. It has been said that: “A tyrannical ruler is better than persistent dissension.”

The Judge [*Qadhi*]

The offices of utmost gravity are that of being a judge [*Qadhi*] among people. It is, therefore, incumbent upon whosoever exercises that function to do so deliberately and seek to ascertain, proceed with firmness and steadiness as he judges between servants of Allah according to the Sacred Law as revealed by Allah; nor should he follow the capricious lust of the heart for it will mislead him from the Path of Allah.

A hadith reports,

مَنْ جُعِلَ قَاضِيًا فَقَدْ دُبِحَ بِغَيْرِ سَكِينٍ.

“Whosoever is appointed a Judge [*Qadhi*] has been slain without a knife.”

Another Hadith reports,

قَاضِيَانِ فِي النَّارِ وَقَاضٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ: قَاضٍ قَضَى بِالْحَقِّ وَهُوَ يَعْلَمُ فَهُوَ فِي الْجَنَّةِ. وَقَاضٍ قَضَى بِالْبَاطِلِ وَهُوَ لَا يَعْلَمُ أَوْ يَعْلَمُ فَهُمَا فِي النَّارِ.

“Two Judges [*Qadhis*] are in Hell-fire, and one Judge [*Qadhi*] is in paradise. A *Qadhi* who adjudicates, according to what Allah has ordained, the truth [*al-haqq*] knowingly goes to Paradise. The other Judges [*Qadhi*] who decides according to falsehood [*batil*] knowingly or unknowingly, both are in Hell.”

The Judge [*Qadhi*], may Allah guide him, therefore should be on maximum guard against ingratiating, dissimulation and should be a concern for other people. Indeed he should concentrate his attention on Allah, the Exalted alone who watches over him. The judge should judge according to the truth [*al-haqq*] as by Allah revealed and which Allah shows him. When matters become tangled, he should arm himself with deliberation until the truth, as by Allah revealed, becomes clear to him. If it does, he should proceed; otherwise, he should resort to reconciliation between the disputants on a given issue, which is based on mutual consent and choice, rather than compulsion and use of force.

It must be known that the position most grave and most feared to be in is that of a judge [*Qadhi*]. For this reason, precedent virtuous learned [*ulama*] have expressed caution about it. These include the likes of al-Imam Sufyan ath-Tsauri and al-Imam Abu Hanifah and those of their rank. Because they refused this office, they exposed themselves to the pain of lashing, imprisonment and exile from their country. These reports are well known in their biography. Until today, those armed with sound prudence and caution among the people of knowledge [*ilm*] have continued to distancing themselves from the office of the Judge [*Qadhi*] and refraining from it most resolutely, both out of fear for their destiny and out of extreme insightful caution about their religion.

The authoritative Sheikh Muhaqqiq Ismail bin Muhammad al-Hadhrami of Yemen¹ was appointed the Chief Justice [*Qadhi*] of the country, and he then selected one of his relatives by marriage as a judge of the area of Zabid. Sheikh Ismail visited him one day and saw with his relative clothes which Sheikh Ismail had not seen before he appointed the relative as a judge. Sheikh Ismail asked him: “Where did you get these?”

¹ He was a learned and leading figure in the knowledge of Shafi'i Jurisprudent, originated from Hadhramawt. He was born in a village under Zabid governorate in Yemen called Kafati and passed away there in 676H.

The relative answered to him: “From your good pleasure [*barakah*]. O Chief Justice.” Sheikh Ismail was shocked by the answer and said to him, “Allah will slay me if I do not dismiss you!” Sheikh Ismail dismissed his relative from the post of judge. There are many well-known anecdotes in this vein. In instilling fear into the judges and cautioning them, a poet said:

إِذَا حَانَ الْأَمِيرُ وَكَاتِبَاهُ وَقَاضِي الْأَرْضِ دَاهَنَ فِي الْقَضَاءِ
فَوَيْلٌ لِلْأَمِيرِ وَكَاتِبِيهِ وَقَاضِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ قَاضِي السَّمَاءِ

If the King and his scribes ply the fiddle
And the earthly judge his judgments diddles,

Then doom awaits the King and his Scribes.

Woe, the earthly judge the Heavenly Judge’s judgment awaits.

Receiving Bribes

Judges should be on their guard against taking bribes given to influence their decisions because that is one of the most cardinal sins. Indeed, the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him. Curses the briber and the bribed, and that one who plies between the two.

Among the grave and unsafe jurisdiction is being put in charge of the properties of orphans and similar positions like being in charge of the Endowment [*Awqaf*] and charities.

He, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said to Abu Dharr, may Allah have mercy on him¹, “O Abu Dharr! I see that you are weak, and I wish for you what I wish for myself. Do not rule over two people and do not become the guardian of an orphan’s property!” Indeed he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him counts devouring of the orphans’ property as among the gravest and most feared sins.

Allah, the Exalted, says, وَلَا تَقْرُبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ.

¹ Abu Dharr Al-Ghifari, always ponders upon the events that he experienced and befell upon him during the day. He considered it forbidden to keep personal expenses [*nafkah*] more than a day’s worth and passed away in Rabad in 32H.

“Come not nigh to the orphan’s property except to improve it.”¹

The Exalted says,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيرًا.

“Those who unjustly eat up the property of the orphans, eat up a Fire into their bodies: they will soon be enduring a blazing fire.”²

As for the Endowment [*waqf*] and charities, it is incumbent upon he who is concerned about his religion and faith distance from them altogether and not to exercise any part thereof. However, if he is tested and tried with some of it, he should be cautious when applying this function for fear of Allah, and he should do his utmost to preserve what had been placed in his charge. Above all, he should first carefully look after it, then discharge it in the prescribed manner and disburse it where directed. Indeed, he may still err who exercises the commission of Endowment [*waqf*] and charities even though he does not betray the trust nor does take anything from it. Instead, he neglects it and also fails to keep the truth faithfully and with beneficence. In connection with this honesty comes the management and maintenance of these resources. For he who derelict in his responsibility and betrayer in his trust, is equal in sinning and transgression.

Honest and Good Governor Receives Allah Good Pleasure

Now, the governor who is characterised by justice and a sense of beneficence and excellence, who proceeds among his subjects with beneficent and excellent and well-pleasing conduct have a unique position in the presence of Allah. If he discharges the commission with distinction and a spirit of beneficence, there is due to him from Allah a great reward and noble recompense. Let him then purify his intent from all other considerations save Allah Alone, as he exercises the commission, and let him establish the commission with patience and in the spirit of seeking the good pleasures of Allah, the Exalted. Indeed, the Messenger of Allah may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

¹ Surah 6 Al-An’am Verse 152.

² Surah 4 An-Nisaa Verse 10.

سَبْعَةٌ يُظِلُّهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظِلِّهِ يَوْمَ لَا ظِلَّ إِلَّا ظِلُّهُ: إِمَامٌ عَادِلٌ، وَشَابٌّ نَشَأَ فِي عِبَادَةِ اللَّهِ

“There are seven whom Allah places under His shadow the day when there is no other shadow except His shadow: a just Leader [*Imam*] and a young person who grew up worshipping [*ibadah*] in obedience to Allah.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,
مِنْ إِجْلَالِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى إِجْلَالَ ذِي الشَّيْبَةِ الْمُسْلِمِ، وَحَامِلِ الْقُرْآنِ غَيْرِ الْعَالِي فِيهِ وَالْعَاجِي عَنْهُ، وَالسُّلْطَانِ الْمُقْسِطِ.

“Amongst the veneration of Allah, the Exalted, includes the one who gives great respect to a Muslim elderly, the reciter of the Quran, who does not exceed the boundaries laid therein nor desert its ordinances, and the just leader or authority [*sultan*].”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

يَوْمٌ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ عَادِلٍ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ عِبَادَةٍ سِتِينَ سَنَةً.

“A day in the life of a just leader or authority [*sultan*] is of greater merit than sixty years of worship [*ibadah*].”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him also said,

السُّلْطَانُ ظِلُّ اللَّهِ فِي أَرْضِهِ يَأْوِي إِلَيْهِ الْمُظْلَمُونَ.

“The sultan is the shadow of Allah in His earth, the wronged and oppressed resort to him for shelter.”

And said he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him,

الْمُقْسِطُونَ عَلَى مَنَابِرٍ مِنْ نُورٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ: الَّذِينَ يَعْدِلُونَ فِي حُكْمِهِمْ وَأَهْلِيهِمْ وَمَا وُلُّوا.

“They just will be seated on the pulpits of light on the Day of Judgment, they who are just in their judgments and in the dealings with their families and those upon whom they have authority.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا تُرَدُّ دَعْوَتُهُمْ: الصَّائِمُ حَتَّى يُفْطِرَ، وَالْإِمَامُ الْعَادِلُ، وَدَعْوَةُ الْمَظْلُومِ.

“There are three whose supplications are not turned down, namely, (the supplication of) those who fast until he breaks it, the just leader [*Imam*] and the supplication of the oppressed.”

However, if the person in authority tyrannises and perpetrates injustice, he is destined for the most-evil station and the worst of states. Double penalty and punishment befall him, penalty and punishment equal to the number of those servants of Allah he oppressed, those whose rights neglected, those whose affairs disregarded, and those whom he failed to stop from oppressing others, not to mention other sins to which evil rulers and tyrannical ones expose themselves. Once Rasulullah may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said that "This matter concerning governing will remain in the hands of the Quraish for as long as when asked for mercy they grant such mercy, and when judging they do so with justice. Whosoever amongst them fails to do this, upon him will be the curse of Allah, the Angels and all humankind. Whatever they do, their prayers and fast, will not be accepted in compensation."

And said he may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him,
يُجَاءُ بِالْإِمَامِ الْجَائِرِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فْتُخَاصِمُهُ الرَّعِيَّةُ، فَيَقْلِبُونَهُ عَلَيْهِ، فَيَقَالُ لَهُ سُدَّ رُكْنًا
مِنْ أَرْكَانِ جَهَنَّمَ.

"The tyrannical ruler will be brought on the Day of Judgment, and subjects will successfully make their case against him, and he will be told: "Fill the gap in one corner of the Hell-fire."

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,
إِنَّهُ سَيَكُونُ بَعْدِي أَمْرَاءُ مَنْ صَدَقْتُهُمْ بِكَذِبِهِمْ، وَأَعَانَهُمْ عَلَى ظُلْمِهِمْ، فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي وَلَسْتُ
مِنْهُ، وَلَيْسَ بِوَارِدٍ عَلَيَّ الْخَوْضَ. وَمَنْ لَمْ يُصَدِّقْهُمْ بِكَذِبِهِمْ، وَلَمْ يُعِنْهُمْ عَلَى ظُلْمِهِمْ فَهُوَ
مِنِّي وَأَنَا مِنْهُ، وَهُوَ وَارِدٌ عَلَيَّ الْخَوْضَ.

"After me, rulers will appear such that whosoever believes in their falsehood and assists them in their wrong-doing and oppression are not of me, nor I of them; and they will not meet me at the Pool [Hawdh]. And whosoever does not believe in their falsehood nor does he aid them in their wrongdoing and oppression, he will be of me, and I will be of him, and he will come to me at the Pool [Hawdh] to drink."

Now if such evil befalls those who believed them in their falsehood, and aided them in their wrongdoing and oppression, what then

will be the destiny of the ruler? With Allah, we seek protection from trial and tribulation, and we supplicate to grant us well-being both in this world and the Next and include us among the companions of justice and beneficence namely those who are engaged in His obedience and what pleases Him both in private and in public.

Now, know that it is incumbent and imperative upon whosoever is given authority over an affair of Muslims to exercise such power justly and sincerely among whomsoever he sits in authority and to offer them advice. It is also incumbent upon everyone to practice justice with those under his administration, like members of his family, children and those whom ‘his right hand’ possesses.

Indeed, said he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him,

كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ.

“You are all shepherd, and every one of you is accountable for your flock.”

There was a reported hadith which said that a man would be recorded as a tyrant when he has under his authority no one else except members of his household. That is because he tyrannises them.

Another reported hadith which said that “Members of one’s family and one’s children will cling to him on the Day of Judgement as they say, O our Lord! Take our right from him, because he did not cause us to know the sacred duty we have towards You as a matter of Divine Right.”

It is therefore incumbent upon him to teach them what is binding upon them, in the way of obedience to Allah, what is compulsory and also what He prohibits and thus to be avoided. He should also urge them to carry out the commands and keep away from prohibitions.

It is also incumbent upon him to acknowledge their rights as Allah has ordained for them and to ensure that he does not support some to act wrongfully against others. He should also take action to restore the right of the aggrieved from he who commits a wrong.

As for his responsibility towards a slave, he is to get him food and clothing and not to force him to do work and perform service which he is unable to. Also, he has a duty not to beat him or to abuse him wrongfully. Were he to do that then that will accordingly be recompensed against him on Judgement Day, as has been recorded in the sayings of the Companions [*al-Akhbar*].

If he keeps livestock, he also must look after it properly. He also has to feed it, give it water to drink and do all that is necessary for its welfare. He should do that either himself or ask one of his children or one of his servants to do. A hadith narrated by Ahmad, he may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ فِي هَذِهِ الْبَهَائِمِ فَارْكَبُوهَا صَالِحَةً.

“Have fear [*taqwa*] for Allah when dealing with these animals, and ride them with righteousness”, or as he said it.

A hadith from Ahmad and reported by Abu Hurairah that he may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

أَنَّ امْرَأَةً دَخَلَتْ النَّارَ فِي هِرَّةٍ رَبَطَتْهَا حَتَّى مَاتَتْ، لَا هِيَ أَطْعَمَتْهَا وَسَقَتْهَا، وَلَا هِيَ تَرَكَتْهَا تَأْكُلُ مِنْ حَشَاشِ الْأَرْضِ.

“A lady enters Hell-fire because of a cat she ties until it dies; she neither fed it nor gave it water to drink. She did not let it go so that it may help itself to the creeping things of the earth.”

وَبِاللَّهِ التَّوْفِيقِ وَالْإِعَانَةِ وَعَلَيْهِ التَّكْلَانِ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى

“The capacity to conform and the assistance is with Allah, we put our trust in Him, and there is neither resource nor strength except with Allah, the Blessed and Exalted.”



Chapter Four

The Fourth Category

دَعْوَةُ التُّجَّارِ وَالزَّرَّاعِ وَالصُّنَّاعِ

A Call to those in Business and Farmers Workers and Executives

The fourth category consists of those in business, merchants, farmers, craftsmen, artisans and men like them who are connected with earning a living, including the executives and workers. Some of these things count as collective obligations [*fardhu kifayah*] in day-to-day earning a living, especially those which are basic like farming and weaving (plaiting) and such like, (it does not matter whether he/she is an owner of the business, a manager, an executive, a supervisor or just a worker), this is a word of counsel to them, a reminder, and a caution. Allah, the Exalted says,

وَلَقَدْ مَكَّنَّاكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَعَايِشَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ.

“It is We Who have placed you with authority on earth, and provided you with means for the fulfilment of your life: small are the thanks that you give.”¹

The Exalted also says,

أَهُمْ يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَةَ رَبِّكَ نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَعِيشَتَهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا سُخْرِيًّا وَرَحْمَةُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ.

¹ Surah 7 al-Araf Verse 10.

“It is We Who would portion out between them their livelihood in the life of this world: and We raise some above others in rank, so that some may command work from others. But the mercy of Your Lord is better than that which they amass.”¹

There is, therefore, a command to earn a lawful living on one’s behalf as well as on behalf of one’s dependents like a wife and children.

A hadith narration reported, طَلَبُ الْحَلَالِ فَرِيضَةٌ بَعْدَ الْفَرِيضَةِ

“Seeking what is lawful [*halal*] is an obligation after having fulfilled the obligatory (worship and command of Allah).”

Another Hadith on the same subject narrated:

مَنْ أَمْسَى كَالَأَمْسَى مِنَ الْحَلَالِ أَمْسَى مَغْفُورًا لَهُ

“He who reaches the evening tired from seeking a lawful living reaches the evening (with his sins) forgiven.”

Some reports in earlier manuscripts [*Atsar*] stated that indeed Allah loves a believer that has a job (that is, earning a living) and detest those known not to seek work to make a living nor in search for the hereafter.

Indeed, the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, puts the person who works to earn a living that will keep him away from begging and keep decent, members of his household and his weak [dependents] children in the same rank (degree) as those who strive in Allah’s path [*mujahid*]. A Hadith narration reported,

التَّاجِرُ الصَّدُوقُ الْأَمِينُ يُجْشَرُ مَعَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ.

“A truthful, honest merchant will be raised and assembled with prophets and those consistently truthful [*as-Siddiqin*].”

However, the businessman in his pursue and the worker in his job have duties which they have to fulfil, such tasks are either binding duties [*fardu*] or emphasised supererogatory [*asSunnah almuakkadah*].

¹ Surah 43 az-Zukhruf Verse 32.

Businessmen and Traders Must Know Business Rules

The first and foremost is to study such knowledge that will inform him of those duties Allah has made binding upon him and which He has made additional (voluntary) in his business or job or manufacturing line. Otherwise, he will get into what is forbidden and what is dubious. That will lead him to tread the Path of Satan and not the path towards the Compassionate [*arRahman*].

A person in business must learn the laws of buying and selling, usury [*riba*], advance sale or futures transactions [*as-salam*], personal loans, pledge, lease and hire services and similar subjects including the laws of those transactions in which he must deal most frequently. He must study the basic laws which govern them, and he should not enter into any transaction until he knows what Allah's law has to say about it.

Similarly, the manufacturers, the workers and the tradesman must learn Allah's law regarding their craft and trade. He must also learn that he must be sincere to Muslims or else he will act wrongfully and get into great trouble.

He should avoid lies, and false promises for a hadith reported,

وَيْلٌ لِلتَّاجِرِ مِنْ "لَا وَاللَّهِ" وَ "بَلَى وَاللَّهِ" وَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُحْتَزِفِ مِنْ "غَدٍ وَبَعْدَ غَدٍ".

“The bottom pit of Hell awaits the merchant for (his) “No! In the Name of Allah” and “But! In the Name of Allah,” and the bottom pit of Hell waits the craftsman who keeps on promising “tomorrow and a day after tomorrow.” ”

Importance of Intentions

Indeed, it is emphasised and necessary for the businessman and workers, to establish good objectives and intention towards their goals in doing business, earning a living, and how they go about their activities. Let their intention be to maintain decency, to make a sufficient living to stop themselves from begging or seeking help, or to covet what other people possess. It should also be their intention to fulfil such responsibilities that are binding upon them concerning their wives and children and others

like them. With such intentions they will count among those who work to obey Allah, the Exalted, and work to earn His pleasure and reward. They should also make it their intention to maintain ties of kinship by donating to relatives, to give alms [*sadaqah*] to the poor and the needy, help the weak and the indigent. Such devotion they will carry out from the excess remaining over and above their needs and the needs of their binding charges. Indeed, a believer's intention is better than his work. Indeed, with the conscious of the declared righteous intention, a believer may well attain what he cannot achieve with his actions. Expressing an intention is easy for everybody since it does not involve many difficulties, while tasks may be difficult to accomplish on some occasions.

Now, if a businessman and a worker had declared the intention to help Muslims and make it easy for them to get the things in which they need, they will earn some reward, even if they were to give them a replacement or something in exchange which has value, for indeed, the bounty of Allah is immense, and His generosity flows copiously.

Do Not Neglect the Prayers!

It is crucial for the businessman, traders and artisans to ensure that their businesses do not absorb them to the point that their obligatory prayers suffer, so that they take them out of their prescribed times, or they establish them in a random fashion or rush, and as a result, the necessary pillars of prayers, like bowing and prostration are done improperly, and this is because some of them are so eager to hurry back to their business, work or crafts that this urge may well press them to such improprieties; and such irregularities are among things much forbidden in religion.

Indeed, it is among the stressed obligations upon them not to postpone prayers from their initial periods; theirs is the duty to establish such prayers in congregation. Both these failures, delaying prayer from their initial periods and not establishing them in 'congregation' [*jamaah*] both these are a significant loss in religion, a loss that the whole world, were it given to him, could not make right. Also, they should not fail to do the fixed additional or supererogatory prayers [*rawatib*] as well as perform those suitable tasks and extra devotions which they can maintain.

When engaged in their business or craft, they should be reciting the Quran or routine remembrance and reflection of Allah [*Dhikrullah*]. Only essential things should divert them from this, not idle or foolish talk nor deep conversations about this world. For it is possible and comfortable most of the time and much of the time to combine business and work on the one hand with remembrance and reflection of Allah on the other, and this is so for those whom Allah has blessed with the grace of capacity, and as a result, their primary concern is their religion and the state of things in the next world and their ultimate return there.

Do Not Lie and Cheat in Business and Work

Business people and workers should avoid lies and deception in their trade and crafts, that is an emphasised obligation. Indeed, said he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace,

“He who deceives us is not from among us.” مَنْ عَشَنَّا فَلَيْسَ مِنَّا.

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said this when he saw a stack of food and put his holy hand into it and found it to be damp and said, “O owner of the food, what is this?” “The sky (meaning rain) has touched it, O Messenger of Allah”. He, may Allah's blessings and peace in upon him said. “You ought to have brought it out into the open so that people could see it. He who deceives us is not from among us.”

Among the lies which are severely forbidden is for businessmen and craftsmen to say: “I got this for so much and I have been offered so much for it” when he is lying (in all that) and when he is thereby conning his brother and deceiving him. (His brother Muslim) who buys the item may well believe him because he trusts him while he, for his part, treats him unjustly and wrongfully takes his brother's money.

They have a duty also not to utter oaths in the Name of Allah to promote their wares even if they do so truthfully for surely Allah is too Exalted and Glorious for His Name to be invoked on all affair of this world. As for falsehood and disobedience in the Name of Allah, the Exalted, is among the major sins. A hadith narration reported,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبْغِضُ الْبَائِعَ الْخَلَّافَ، وَإِنَّ الَّذِي يَخْلِفُ بِاللَّهِ فَاجِرًا لِيُرَوِّجَ بِذَلِكَ مَتَاعَهُ أَحَدُ الثَّلَاثَةِ الَّذِينَ لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ.

“Indeed, Allah dislikes a seller who is frequently swearing an oath. Verily who swears by Allah’s Name a lie to entice a sale, is one of the three groups of who Allah will not speak to, will not look at during the Day of Judgment and will not remember to cleanse them and severe punishment for them.”¹

Upon whom be blessings and peace, reportedly said,

الْيَمِينُ مَنْقَعَةٌ لِلسَّعَةِ، مَمْحَقَةٌ لِلْبَرَكََةِ.

“Making an oath to sells goods and wipes away blessings,”

In another version “wipes away earnings”.

It was reported, upon whom be blessings and peace, said,

الْبَّيْعَانِ بِالْخِيَارِ مَا لَمْ يَتَفَرَّقَا فَإِنْ صَدَقَا وَبَيَّنَّا بُرْكَ لَهُمَا، وَإِنْ كَذَبَا وَكْتَمَّا مُحِقَتْ بَرَكَهُمَا.

“The two parties have the option of ending the transaction as long as they have not left the place of business; and if they are truthful and make clear the fault (of the item for sale), they will have the transaction blessed; but if they lie and conceal (the faults), they will have the blessings of their transaction wiped away.”

Business people and artisans have a duty therefore to disclose the faults of their (goods), defects which will only be known by full disclosure. If they do not make such defects clear, they will be cheating

¹ Similar mentioned in Surah 3 ala-Imran Verse 77.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا أُولَئِكَ لَا خَلَاقَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ.

As for those who sell the faith they owe to Allah and their own plighted word for a small price, they shall have no portion in the Hereafter: nor will Allah (deign to) speak to them or look at them on the Day of Judgment, nor will He cleanse them (of sin): they shall have a grievous Penalty.

and acting unjustly. More so if they do business with someone incompetent in business, either because he is ignorant or otherwise weak, they must take care of him. They should do their utmost in their sincerity towards him. They should deal openly and kindly with him the way they would deal with someone who is well versed and has knowledge about the sale-item, the sale-item desired by the weak, inexperienced buyer. That is the only way for them, and they will not escape Allah's wrath except by doing that. They should not treat that weak client unfairly as is done by merchants and artisans who are not mindful of their duty to Allah [taqwa].

Traders and Merchants should beware of giving short measures and tipping the balance. Such actions are the heinous, forbidden things.

Allah, the Exalted, says,

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِينَ. الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَكْتَالُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ. وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَوْ وَزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ. أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَبْعُوثُونَ. لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ. يَوْمَ يَقُومُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ.

“Woe to those that deal in fraud, those who, when they have to receive by measure, from men, exact full measure, but when they have to give by measure or weight to men, give less than due. Do they not think that they will be called to account? On a Mighty Day, A Day when all humankind will stand before the Lord of the Worlds?”¹

It was reported, upon whom be blessings and peace, said,

يَا مَعْشَرَ التُّجَّارِ! إِنَّكُمْ وَلِيتِمٌ أَمْرًا هَلَكْتُ فِيهِ الْأُمَمُ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ: الْمِكْيَالُ وَالْمِيزَانُ.

“O assembly of merchants, you have indeed been entrusted with an affair in which nations before you came to ruin. It is subject of measurements and weights,” or as he, upon whom be blessings and peace, actually said.

One of the virtuous men of the past had a habit, whenever he weighed to sell, he added a measure, giving them a grain more. Whenever he weighs for himself, he took less a unit. When asked why he transaction such, he answered, “I do not wish to buy the bottom pit of Hellfire from Allah just for a measure of grain worth of weight.”

¹ Surah 83 al-Mutaffifeen Verses 1-6.

Beware of Hoarding and dealing in Fake Products

The business or traders are caution against monopoly, hoarding or cornering the market, and warn against circulating counterfeit currency to people or any illegal transactions and sales which are disapproved. Even if such transactions may enrich him in this world, they will immensely harm his religion as well as his life in the next world. Further, they will also expound him to ruin and annihilation in his life on earth, and results in negative repercussions all around him.

As for monopoly, hoarding or cornering the market that means buying food or a similar product which people need or want to hold back the sale until prices soar.

A hadith narration mentioned, **أَنَّ الْمُخْتَكِرَ مَلْعُونٌ وَالْجَالِبَ مَرْزُوقٌ.**

“Indeed, the hoarders or monopoly are accursed, and the trader that spurs or promotes trade is sustained.”

The excellent trader or importer is one who buys to sell the product (or food) at its time, earning but a modest profit.

A reported narration said,

أَنَّ مَنْ اخْتَكَرَ الطَّعَامَ أَرْبَعِينَ يَوْمًا ثُمَّ تُصَدِّقُ بِهِ لَمْ يَكُنْ تَصَدِّقُهُ بِهِ كَفَّارَةً لِإِثْمِ اخْتِكَارِهِ.

“Indeed, anyone who monopolised or hoarded food for forty days then gives it out as charity. His charity will not rub away the sins of his hoarding.”

Another narrated report said, **أَنَّ الْمُخْتَكِرِينَ يَحْشُرُونَ مَعَ قَتَلَةِ الْفُوسِ.**

“Indeed, the hoarders will be assembled (on the Day of Judgment) with murderers.”

The commander of the faithful, Ali bin Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, did indeed set fire to the food of a hoarder.

As for circulating of counterfeit currency, that is undoubtedly a deception and fraud forbidden in religion, unless if the currency happens to be coins used by people of the country. Then even though it be fake in terms of the mixture, (like gold or silver) with copper, it is still permissible to use since it is the currency circulating in that town.

However, once some people reject it because of excess copper or because it is pure copper, then it ceases to be permissible to promote it among people or slip it into currencies with which people trade. If one did that, he would be deceiving and defrauding others. Anyone who comes by a coin of this nature must destroy it by throwing it into a well or by some other means of destruction, or he should take it to someone who can extract the silver content from the copper alloy or any other alloy and it will thus be valued accordingly. As for the coin which is originally pure copper, he should not introduce it among those of silver which are in circulation among the people. If he does that, then he would be committing deception and fraud as mentioned in verse,

وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ

“But they only deceive themselves and realise not!”¹

Illegal Transactions

The ugliest and the most excessive of unlawful transactions is Usury [*Riba*]. For whoever deals in it exposes himself to war with Allah and His Messenger. As Allah, what an Exalted Speaker is He says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَذَرُوا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبَا إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ. فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ.

“O you who believe! Fear Allah, and give up what remains of your demand for usury, if you are indeed believers. If you do not do it, take notice of war from Allah and His Messenger”²

The Exalted says,

الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبَا وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا فَمَنْ جَاءَهُ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ فَانْتَهَى فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ. يَمْحَقُ اللَّهُ الرِّبَا وَيُزِيلُ الصَّدَقَاتِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ.

¹ Surah 2 Baqarah Verse 9.

² Surah 2 al Baqarah Verse 278 – 279.

“Those who devour usury will not stand except as stands one whom the Evil One by his touch has driven to madness. That is because they say: “Trade is like usury,” but Allah hath permitted trade and forbidden usury. Those who after receiving direction from their Lord, desist, shall be pardoned for the past; their case is for Allah to judge, but those who repeat (the offence) are Companions of the Fire; they will abide therein (forever). Allah will deprive usury of all blessing, but will give increase for deeds of charity; He loves not creatures ungrateful and wicked.”¹

Indeed, the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, cursed the devourer of usury, its agent and its scribe and its witness and he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

الرِّبَا بَضْعٌ وَسَبْعُونَ شُعْبَةً، أَذْنَاهَا مِثْلُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ الرَّجُلُ أُمَّهُ.

“Riba is more than seventy parts, the smallest being like someone having sexual intercourse with his mother.”

There are many well-known narrations recorded that deals with the severities and harsh issues concerning usury [*Riba*].

Usury is among the cardinal sins [*al-kabair*]. To sum things up, undoubtedly that it is not lawful to buy silver with silver, neither food with food of the same kind except if it is done hand-to-hand and equal for equal. If the type differs like gold for silver and wheat for corn or sorghum, such disparity (comparison) is permissible and mutual, and immediate delivery becomes necessary without delay or postponement.

A scheme or ploy, which appears to avoid usury, are also considered usury. Indeed, many learned have declared that the trick which avoids usury is not permissible and that they serve no purpose except to multiply (Allah’s) wrath and displeasure. Also, then there is the feared risk of mounting sins for trying to make lawful what Allah has forbidden and doing so without any argument or valid explanation. However, some of them have said that such ploys are permissible when it comes to the laws of this world rather than the laws of the next world, and this is also severe for whoever ponders over this. For the judgments

¹ Surah 2 al Baqarah Verse 275-276.

of this world may be linked with what is evident and close to them, while its true nature is hidden, which when related to affairs of the next world they are among the worst act which displease Allah, the Exalted, and draw His anger and painful chastisement. Look at the state of such a hypocrite who goes public with his faith while he harbours unbelief in his heart, how all his affairs appear just like those of believers until, in the next world, he will end up suffering worse than unbelievers who were quite open about their unbelief. He comes to such an end because of his attempt to deceive Allah and play tricks with him. The deceiver will not succeed with his deception; that is, he plots to make lawful what Allah has forbidden to him. He cannot help but be worse off than he who indulged in the prohibited quite openly, without any trickery. Allah may well forgive the latter or give him the capacity to repent. As for the deceiver, when will he repent from something which he does not regard as sin nor as forbidden to him? Now, that is among the biggest of Satan's intrigues, whereby he involves the human in matters which displease Allah, then makes him imagine things and confuses him into thinking what he is doing is part of obedience or part of the permissible.

Let a Muslim beware of such things and let him beware of Satan's illusions. The Exalted says,

وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذِ الشَّيْطَانَ وَلِيًّا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُبِينًا. يَعِدُهُمْ وَيُمَيِّتُهُمْ وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا.

“Whoever, forsaking Allah, takes Satan for a friend, has of a surety suffered a manifest loss. Satan makes them promises and creates in them false desires, but Satan's promises are nothing but deception.”¹

A deceiver may try to make usury lawful while Allah has forbidden it. He may do so through a vow or an acknowledgement, or by some similar means. He may do so while knowing in his heart that it is not his intention to use such a vow or affirmation correctly except his only motive is to make it outwardly lawful in the eyes of such people who do not know what he intends in his heart. A deceiver is deluded and deceives himself before Allah, the Almighty, the Perfectly Strong (the

¹ Surah 4 an-Nisaa Verse 120.

Inexhaustible) and the Manifest. Whom nothing is hidden both in the earth as well as in the heavens. And whosoever records the transactions of these deceivers, and whosoever bears witness to them is their accomplice in their vanities and illusions. They become accomplices once they know the inside story and once they strongly suspect their real intentions judging from the accompanying circumstances. Thus such recorders and witnesses also run the risk of courting Allah's penalty and chastisement.

وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ

And soon will the unjust assailants know what vicissitudes their affairs will take!¹

Avenues of Usury are Plentiful

Know that, indeed, Usury has many channels. For those in business must study and be aware of steps which people use most frequently when dealing with it. In the matter which is not clear to him, he should consult the knowledgeable who are fearful and mindful of their duties to Allah rather than those whose job is to pass rulings and interpretation to permit such transactions. They take a superficial view of knowledge, and such an opinion, on the whole, is neither valid nor does it stand up in the eyes of those learned who know Allah's Book, the practices of His Messenger, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, and the conduct of virtuous men of the past.

Know that usury and similar dubious business transactions which resemble it have spread far and wide in these times among those specifically involved in business and the general public, except for those who Allah has protected and how few they are! The truthful and honest one promised these occurrences, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, for he said,

يَأْتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ لَا يَبْقَى أَحَدٌ إِلَّا أَكَلَ الرِّبَا، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَأْكُلْهُ أَصَابَهُ مِنْ عَذَابِهِ.

“There will come a time upon mankind when there will be no one who will eat nothing but Usury, and if he does not take it, then some of its dust will touch him.”

¹ Surah 26 Ash-shuraa Verse 227.

There is no Fair and Honesty in Business

Furthermore, it is incumbent upon a businessman to conduct all his affairs based on justice and act honestly in good deeds, and these are Allah's commands in His word, Blessed and Exalted is He says,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ.

“Indeed, Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion: He instructs you, that ye may receive admonition.”¹

As for justice in business, that means avoiding injustice and deception, concealing of faults and shortcomings of the products, giving short measures and weights, and all things which are forbidden in his buying and selling; including fulfilling acts binding upon him as a trader such as advising the other parties and act sincerely, honestly and faithfulness.

As for the act of good deeds, this means to act graciously, righteousness and equitableness like releasing the other party if he wishes to withdraw from a sale agreement after giving the undertaking to go through with it. Indeed, may blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَنْ أَقَالَ نَادِمًا صَفْقَةً أَقَالَ اللَّهُ عَشْرَتَهُ.

“Whosoever releases a regret party who so wishes from his agreed deal, Allah will relieve him from his fall (during the Day of Judgment).”

Be Magnanimous and Gracious in Business

He should be gracious when he buys, be kind when sells, fair when paying and gentle when he asks for repayment. He may Allah's blessing, and peace be upon him said,

رَحِمَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا سَمَحًا إِذَا بَاعَ، سَمَحًا إِذَا اشْتَرَى، سَمَحًا إِذَا قَضَى سَمَحًا إِذَا افْتَضَى.

“Allah has mercy upon the servant who is tolerant when selling, tolerant when buying, tolerant when paying, and tolerant when asking for payment.”

¹ Surah 16 AnNahl Verse 90.

He should be content with a modest profit, especially when dealing with his friends and his close relatives, the weak among Allah's servants, such as the poor and the indigent. He should give out a lot of alms and do good deeds; he should take that opportunity whenever he can.

The earlier righteous men of virtue involved in earning a living have set models of ethical conduct, and their examples are well-known just as Imam al-Ghazzali has rehearsed a good deal of them in his Book on Ethics of Earning a Living.

A business person and an artisan or a worker should also conduct their business with justice and excellence, that is, they should avoid injustice and deception; they should be sincere and honest, truthful and faithful, and also they should act according to those qualities associated with the people who are mindful of their duties to Allah [*taqwa*] and excellence in conduct [*Ihsan*], whom Allah, the Exalted, says in His book that He is with them,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ.

“For Allah is with those who restrain themselves (from deviating from their duties to Allah), and those who do good.”¹

It is incumbent upon business people and workers not to victimise and dupe a client who is vulnerable because of his ignorant or a desperate need drives him by selling to him at a high price and profiteering. On the contrary, they should look after the client's best interests. Firstly, consider the client's condition whether he can look after himself and is knowledgeable in the value of the trade and deal with him accordingly. Otherwise, they will get into harm and sin and so be included amongst those who prefer this world to the next and among those who do not like for (their) Muslim brother what they wish for themselves. Indeed, he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said,

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ.

“He does not believe a (full) belief until he likes for his brother what he likes for himself.”

¹ Surah 16 an Nahl Verse 128.

It was reported that one of the righteous predecessors men of virtue, may Allah bestow his good pleasure on them, was various types of dress at his shop, some of which were offered for a thousand dirhams and some for five hundred dirhams. Once upon a time, he left the shop with his nephew to look after it. A Bedouin came and wanted to buy a dress which was from among those costing five hundred dirhams each. However, the nephew sold it for a thousand dirhams. The Bedouin paid him the money, took the dress and left. However, along the way, the righteous shop owner saw him with the dress and so asked him: "How much did you pay for this?" The Bedouin replied: "A thousand dirhams." He told him: "Its price is five hundred dirhams." The Bedouin said: "But I am satisfied." He said: "Even if you are satisfied, we are not satisfied. Come back with me. Either you take one dress costing a thousand dirhams, or you will take five hundred dirhams plus this dress which you have already taken, or you will take your money and leave our dress." The Bedouin agreed to return to the shop with him and took the five hundred dirhams plus the dress which he bought in the first place.

In another report, we heard that Sariyye as-Saqati, may Allah show him mercy, for days he traded in almonds which he bought for sixty dinars and looked forward to a profit of three dinars for himself. A few days passed by, and an auctioneer came to buy almonds from him. He asked him: "How much?" To which he replied: "Sixty-three dinars." The auctioneer told him: "But their value is now ninety dinars." Sariyye then said: "However, I intend to make a profit of three dinars only." The Auctioneer said: "indeed, and I have made a covenant with Allah that I shall not deceive anyone and that I shall not dupe a Muslim." Therefore, Sarriyy refrained from selling and the Auctioneer too refrained from buying. Incidents like that occurred many times in the lives of the righteous predecessor; and Imam al-Ghazzali, may Allah show him mercy, narrated a good deal of them and these two incidents are among those which he narrated.

These two, and people like them, are among those who work in this world for the sake of the next world and paying more attention in their religion and good deeds. Allah, the Exalted, described them,

رَجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا
تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ. لِيَجْزِيَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَيَزِيدَهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَاللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ
مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِعَرٍ حِسَابٍ.

“By men whom neither traffic nor merchandise can divert from the Remembrance of Allah, nor from regular Prayer, nor the practice of regular Charity: Their only fear is for the Day when hearts and eyes will be transformed (in a world wholly new). That Allah may reward them according to the best of their deeds, and add even more for them out of His Grace: for Allah doth provide for those whom He will, without measure.”¹

Indeed he, upon whom be blessings and peace, said:

التَّاجِرُ الْأَمِينُ الصَّدُوقُ الْمُسْلِمُ مَعَ الشُّهَدَاءِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

“An honest, truthful Muslim merchant will be together with the martyrs on the Day of Judgment.”

Farmers

As for the farmers, and those who earner a living toiling nature, enjoy blessing from their Lord, while they work to earn their living. That is so if they cherish good intentions in what they do and are mindful of their duties to Allah, their Lord, such that the preoccupation with their work does not divert them from establishing their prayers and avoiding transactions forbidden to them in their religion, such as usury and similar actions. Indeed, most of the time farmers do enter into unsound transactions. They are pressured to this because of the need to maintain themselves and their dependents while (at the same time) carrying the burden of their farms.

Furthermore, the crops which they harvest will only come after a long wait: there is a long period from sowing to the time of harvesting, and the farmers need his supplies now. Their farms need maintenance. They need seeds and other equipment. Therefore, they turn to merchants, go-betweeners and people like them to meet their needs until they get the

¹ Surah 24 an-Nur Verse 37-38.

harvest in, but the merchants do not give them such help except on the forbidden usury terms. They are eager for worldly profit and its increases and benefits which harm their religion and their place in the next world. In such transactions, both the lender and the borrower take part in sin, excesses and plunge into usury which counts among the significant ruinous sins, and this is the case even if he who brings out of necessity and desperate need has more excuse than he who gives for the giver gives because he wants profit and increment. Such wicked desires mean that all benefit is lost and all increment is reduced. Allah, the Exalted says,

يَمَحَقُ اللَّهُ الرِّبَا وَيُزِيلُ الصَّدَقَاتِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ.

“Allah will deprive usury of all blessing, but will give increase for deeds of charity; He loves not creatures ungrateful and wicked.”¹

In such business, a “Sale on Credit” is permissible in which payment is deferred to a given period similar to the “Advance Sale” contract with its conditions. In these two transactions, there are ample scopes for proper transactions rather than resorting to usury which is forbidden and blameworthy or resorting to its creative tricks. What is there to say about them has already been mentioned earlier on.

Let the farmer be of good cheer and seek Allah’s huge bounties when his crop is blighted or suffers a shortage. He should have the same attitude when a living being eats his plants, whether it is man or animal or bird. All this goes into his scrolls and to the balance of his good acts so long as he intends it for the sake of Allah and His good pleasure as well as for the sake of the very considerable reward. He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said,

“There is in every living being, a reward.” فِي كُلِّ كَبِدٍ رَكْبَةٌ أَجْرٌ.

This subject has been recorded in many narrations.

It is obligatory to give Alms [Zakat]

He should adhere, and eager to give out alms from his produces whenever that is binding upon him. He should distribute it among those who are

¹ Surah 2 al- Baqara Verse 276.

worthy including the poor and the indigent and the other deserving categories mentioned by Allah in His Glorious Book where the Exalted and Transcendent be He says,

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ.

“Alms are for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer the (funds); for those whose hearts have been (recently) reconciled (to the truth); for those in bondage and in debt; in the cause of Allah; and for the wayfarer: (thus is it) ordained by Allah, and Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom.”¹

He should cover them all if the portion which he gives is sufficient. Otherwise, he should not skip them to give Alms to people outside the categories mentioned in the noble verse. For he who extends beyond the categories mentioned is as though he withholds the Alms as narrated in a Hadith.

Owners of fruits, animals and wealth in other forms, such as gold and silver, and businesses have to give the Alms which Allah has made binding upon them at the appointed times. They also have to distribute it among the deserving people whom Allah has mentioned in His Book. Their intention in doing so should be to obey Allah’s command and to seek His pleasure and reward which He has promised in the Hereafter. They should not fail, nor be lax to the point of failing altogether to give out Alms, may Allah protect us; or by giving out only some of it, or giving it to people who do not deserve it: for all those counts among sins and forbidden things. Whoever commits them courts Allah’s wrath and the wrath of His Messenger. Indeed, if people differ in the misdeeds, they only differ in how far they have neglected and plunged into those perils. He who fails altogether to give out Alms his sin is enormous and his disobedience excessive and heinous.

Verily, Allah has linked prayers with Alms more than once in His Cherished Book. Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, may Allah be pleased with him,

¹ Surah 9 at-Taubah Verse 60.

waged war on the Bedouins who withheld Alms. Said he, with whom Allah may be pleased: “I shall surely wage war on whoever separates the command for Alms and prayers. If they were to withhold from me a young goat which they used to give to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, I would wage war on them for that.”

There are many records in the hadith books mentioning severe and enormous penalties which we do not need to state at length. Indeed they are well-known narrations of the Messengers of Allah.

Withholding Alms carries immediate harm. He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace said,

مَا خَالَطَتِ الزَّكَاةُ مَالًا إِلَّا مَحَقَّتْهُ، وَمَا هَلَكَ مَالٌ مَا فِي بَرٍّ وَلَا فِي بَحْرٍ إِلَّا بِمَنْعِ الزَّكَاةِ.
“Alms do not mix with any wealth except that it will blot it out. No wealth comes to ruin on land and at sea except by withholding Alms.”

He, upon whom Allah’s be blessings and peace, said,

حَصِّنُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بِالزَّكَاةِ، وَذَاوُوا مَرْضَكُمْ بِالصَّدَقَةِ، وَأَعِدُّوا لِلْبَلَاءِ الدُّعَاءَ.
“Protect your wealth with Alms and cure your sick with charity and prepare for trials with supplications.”

Those Who Possess Wealth Must Know the Laws of Alms

Furthermore, business people, traders, farmers and others who possess wealth must study such laws of Alms as are necessary to their station. If they have problems after that, then they should ask those with knowledge who fear Allah. There is quite a lot to the laws of Zakat and how to distribute it. Both have been treated in detail in the treatises of Jurisprudence [*Fiqh*]; whoever needs to know more should consult them.

Business is the Best Means of Earning a Living

Besides, among the most blessed means of living and those carrying maximum returns is business which is done truthfully, faithfully, honestly and with sincerity towards Muslims. After business done in that manner comes livestock breeding.

He, upon who be Allah's blessings and peace, said:

تِسْعَةُ أَعْشَارِ الرِّزْقِ فِي التِّجَارَةِ، وَعَشْرَةٌ فِي الْمَاشِيَةِ.

“Nine-tenths of the means of living is in business and one-tenth is in livestock.”

Also, farming, although it is a challenging job, it carries an immense reward for the one who has a good intention and mindful of his duties to his Lord. It was narrated in a hadith, اَلْتَمِسُوا الرِّزْقَ فِي حَبَايَا الْأَرْضِ.

“Seek sustenance in the hidden depths of the earth.”

It was said that, indeed, this is a call to farming. Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “Those who rely on Allah are the farmers. They cast their seed in the ground and stay waiting for Allah's bounty.” Or as he may have said, may Allah be pleased with him.

Among the best means of earning a living and the most lawful are gathering firewood and fishing, then the gathering grass from permissible places. As long as one takes into consideration what is permitted and exercises devoutness and caution in making these items and selling them, these means of living can be among the most lawful means of living and subsistence. Many among the servants of Allah, both in the past and in later times, have earned their living through these means.

It is recommended to go out early when seeking to earn a living, he, upon who be blessings and peace, said,

اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ لِأُمَّتِي فِي بُكُورِهَا

“O Lord, bless my people who set out in the early hours.”

It used to be the custom by he upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, that when he sends out an expedition led by his deputies and generals he sends them out at the beginning of the day. Ibn Wada'ah al-Raamady [the early bird] (may Allah be pleased with him) the companion who narrated this tradition was a merchant. He used to start his business at the beginning of the day. He became wealthy, and his wealth multiplied.

Invoke Allah whilst at Work

Part of the emphasized practises is to do a lot of invocation of Allah whilst at the market place. He, upon whom be blessings and peace said, مَنْ دَخَلَ السُّوقَ فَقَالَ: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ وَهُوَ حَيٌّ لَا يَمُوتُ، بِيَدِهِ الْخَيْرُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيدٌ. كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ أَلْفَ أَلْفِ حَسَنَةٍ. وَمَحَا عَنْهُ أَلْفَ أَلْفِ سَيِّئَةٍ، وَرَفَعَ لَهُ أَلْفَ أَلْفِ دَرَجَةٍ.

“Whoever enters a market and says, “There is no god but Allah. Alone; He has no partners. His is the Sovereignty; And to Him belongs all praise. He causes life and death, He is the Living and never dies, in His hands is good, and He has power over everything,” will have a thousand thousands goods written for him and a thousand thousands immoral acts rubbed off and he is raised a thousand thousands ranks.”

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace said,

التَّاجِرُ الصَّدُوقُ الْأَمِينُ يُحْشَرُ مَعَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ

“A truthful, honest merchant is assembled in the company of prophets, the consistently truthful and martyrs.”

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said,

إِنَّ أَطْيَبَ الْكَسْبِ كَسْبُ التَّجَارِ، الَّذِينَ إِذَا حَدَّثُوا لَمْ يَكْذِبُوا، وَإِذَا اتُّمِنُوا لَمْ يَحُونُوا، وَإِذَا وَعَدُوا لَمْ يُخْلِفُوا، وَإِذَا اشْتَرَوْا لَمْ يَذْمُوا، وَإِذَا بَاعُوا لَمْ يَمْدَعُوا، وَإِذَا كَانَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَمْ يُمْطَلُوا، وَإِذَا كَانَ لَهُمْ لَمْ يُعَسِّرُوا.

“The best of earnings are the earnings of merchants who, when they speak they do not tell lies when trusted do not betray the trust, then make a promise does not fail when to buy does not talk down the purchase when sell they do not praise it. If there is a debt on them, they do not delay payment and when they are owed, they do not press for repayment.”

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said,

يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَكُونَ خَيْرَ مَالِ الْمُسْلِمِ غَنَمًا يَتَّبَعُ بِهَا شَعْفَ الْجِبَالِ وَمَوَاقِعَ الْقَطْرِ، يَفْرُ بِدِينِهِ مِنَ الْفِتَنِ.

“Soon a Muslim’s best wealth will be sheep which he will shepherd to mountain tops or where rain falls, fleeing from the various trials that confront his religion.”

He, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, also said that among the best of livelihoods is that of a man who has the reins of his horse firmly in his hand; and he dashes forth on its back whenever he hears a cry for help or an enemy’s offensive, making for places where fighting and death are most likely. Or of a man with few sheep on one of these mountain tops or the heart of one of the valleys away from humankind establishing prayers, giving out Alms and worshipping his Lord until death comes to him, such a man can only be in good condition.

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said: “Whosoever plants a plant and a bird came to eat from it or an animal, such a one will have that written down as charity”, as narrated by Ibnu Khuzaimah.

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said, “Seven things have their rewards running for a servant while he is in his grave after death: he who has taught a knowledge, or let run a river, or dug a well, or planted a date-palm, or built a mosque, or bequeathed a copy of the Quran, or left behind a child who seeks forgiveness for him after his death, as narrated by Al-Bazzar from Anas, may Allah have mercy on him.

Fatima, may Allah be pleased with her, said, “Once the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, came by me and I was lying down. He shook me with his leg and said, “O my princess! Wake up and bear witness to the sustenance of your Lord and do not be among the heedless. For indeed Allah distributes sustenance for the people is between dawn and sunrise!”



Chapter Five

The Fifth Category

دَعْوَةُ الْفُقَرَاءِ وَالضُّعَفَاءِ وَأَهْلِ الْبَلَاءِ

A Call to the Poor and the Weak Those Afflicted with Catastrophe

They are the poor, the weak, the indigent, and the like among the sick and the afflicted, to them a word of advice and warning, a reminder and caution.

Be aware that in poverty, weakness, and indigence Allah has placed tests and the trials for His servants so that he may thereby reveal their patience to them and their satisfaction with His Decree. Whoever bears up and perseveres will get the reward reserved for the patient, and whoever resents and complains joins those who have strayed for the path of Allah.

Says Allah the Exalted,

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ، وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ. الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ. أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ.

“And We shall most certainly test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil) but give glad tidings to those who persevere. Who says when afflicted with calamity, To Allah,

we belong, and to Him we return. They are those on whom descend blessings from Allah and Mercy and they are the ones that receive guidance.”¹

The Exalted says,

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ حَتَّى نَعْلَمَ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَنَبْلُوَ أَخْبَارَكُمْ.

“We shall try you until we test those among you who strive their utmost and persevere in patience, and We shall try your reported (mettle)”²

Patience and perseverance in the trial is hard and the accompanying reward for the patient is immense, as the Exalted says,

إِنَّمَا يُوفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ.

“Those who patiently persevere will truly receive a reward without measure!”³

The Messenger may blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَنْ تَرَدَّدَ اللَّهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا ثُصِبَ مِنْهُ.

“Allah exposes those He wishes well them to adversity.”⁴

He, upon whom be blessings and peace, said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا أَحَبَّ قَوْمًا ابْتَلَاهُمْ، فَمَنْ رَضِيَ فَلَهُ الرِّضَا، وَمَنْ سَخِطَ فَلَهُ السُّخْطُ.

“When Allah loves a folk, He tests them. Whosoever takes (the test) with acceptance, and good cheer will earn Allah’s good pleasure, and whoever is impatient and upset, he will get the Wrath.”

He, upon whom be blessings and peace, said:

الدُّنْيَا سِجْنُ الْمُؤْمِنِ وَجَنَّةُ الْكَافِرِ.

“The world is a believer’s prison and the unbeliever’s paradise.”

Indeed, Allah has made the earth the believer’s prison so that he renounces it and does not crave for a prolonged stay in it. While longing

¹ Surah 2 al-Baqara Verse 155-157.

² Surah 47 Muhammad Verse 31.

³ Surah 39 az-Zumar Verse 10

⁴ Recorded in Sahih Bukhari and narrated by Abi Hurayrah.

for the desirable eternal life upon departing it, and not at peace towards it nor appease or satisfy with it.

This World is a Place of Adversity

Ibnu Atha 'illah¹ may Allah have mercy on him, said, "Whereas Allah, the Glorious, made the world a place of adversity and a source of changing of fortunes whereas, He knew that you would not accept the bare counsel to renounce it, He makes you taste from the world (such things) as will make it easy for you when it (the world) ends."

In a report attributed as from Allah, the Exalted, said, "O World! Be bitter to my saints, and do not be sweet lest you entice them."

Another report mentioned, "Whenever, Allah, the Wise, accords His servants a fulsome grace, He banishes the world from him entirely."

Allah, the Great, revealed to Moses, upon him be peace, "O Moses! Whenever you see (the world's) riches approaching, then say, 'Behold those are the sins whose penalty has come early'. Whenever you see poverty approaching, then say, 'Welcome! O Vestment of the Virtuous!'"

Once a man said to the Messenger, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said, "Verily, I love you." The prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, answered, "If what you say is true, then prepare for poverty as its defence, indeed poverty flows more quickly to he who loves me than flood water on course to its end."

Now poverty in perseverance is the raiment (clothes) of the prophets and the adornment of the saints as a hadith narrated,

الْفُقَرَاءُ الصُّبْرَاءُ جُلَسَاءُ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

"The patient, persevering poor, will be sitting beside Allah on the Day of Judgment."

¹ His name is Sheikh Tajuddin bin Atha'illah As-Iskandari, a respected zahid and student to Abdul Abbas Al-Mursi and Sheikh Yaqut. Many people benefited from his advice as his words left tangible mark and dominate their lives. He wrote many books and passed away in 707H.

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

اللَّهُ يَذُودُ عَبْدَهُ الْمُؤْمِنَ عَنِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَا يَذُودُ الرَّاعِي الشَّفِيقُ إِبِلَهُ عَنْ مَرَاعِ الْعُرَّةِ

“Allah derives his believing servant [*abd*] away from the world in the same way as an anxious shepherd drives his camels away from hazardous pastures.”

Another reported from a valid source [*warid*] that narrated that “Verily Allah prevents His believing servant from the world as one of you prevents a sick person amongst you from food and drink,” and this means that one would prevent a sick person from eating particular food and drinking particular beverage lest they suffer harm thereby. It follows a hadith that said, “Dieting is the source of medicine!”

Whereas in the eyes of Allah, the world is the most abject of places and the lowliest of things, He has guarded His saints and beloved from it, and raised them away from inclination towards and enjoying it.

A report had come to our knowledge that when Allah, the Exalted, sent Moses and Aaron (Harun), upon them be peace, to the Pharaoh, the accursed and He, the Wise, said to them: “Do not be dazzled by what you see of worldly adornments. If it were My will, I would adorn you with such adornments that Pharaoh would know it lies beyond his ability. But I would rather you do not come into contact with worldly adornments.”

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

لَوْ كَانَتِ الدُّنْيَا تَرَنٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ جَنَاحَ بَعُوضَةٍ مَا سَقَى كَافِرًا مِنْهَا شَرْبَةَ مَاءٍ.

“If this world is worth in the value of one mosquito's wing to Allah, then He would not give an unbeliever as much as a drink of water from it.”

Ponder then, and may Allah show you mercy, how worthless the world is before Allah, and what a trivial it is.

A sound narration quoted, “The world would say to its Lord on the Day of Judgment: ‘O Lord! Appoint me (the world) for the lowermost of your saints’. He, the Exalted, answered, ‘Be quiet! O, you worthless thing, (none of you will be for them)’.”

Now you know that He, Sublime is He, has secluded them from worldly luxury and prevented them from enjoying its passing destructive passion nor cautioned them against it, except because it is worthless and such a trivial. On the other hand, because of their (His love ones) worth and esteem before Him, He would instead they did not get defiled and tainted thereby and lest they become preoccupied with its wares and thus keep away from what is to them infinitely better, most beneficial, lasting and of highest esteem. These are by way of eminence and favours He has saved for them with Him in the Abiding Abode (Heaven) to which they will proceed and live there forever after, that is the parable of “the Garden which the righteous are promised.”¹

He, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him has indeed said, “The poor will enter paradise half a day ahead of the rich and (during that time) it is equal to five hundred years.” They will be in happiness, joy, rest and satisfaction. While the rich are detained to give their account, as they alternate between fear and terrify because of the delights and the desires of the world which they attained and enjoyed.

Categories of the Ascetics

Now, remember that those poor who renounce the world, and had detached themselves from the material world, come in different types.

A category among them is those that flee the worldly life, and even when it is presented to them, be it pure and free. They would have nothing to do with it. Such is their happy adherence to poverty. Furthermore, it frees them from bondage to the world and consequently, all the more, they devote to themselves to the obedience of their Lord and His invocations and intimate dialogues. Once it was said of Ibrahim bin Ad-ham, may Allah be pleased with him, that a man approached him with ten thousand dirhams. He did not accept it. Then he said to the man, “You want that my name erased from the Book of the poor with these ten thousand? No way!”

¹ Part of Surah 13 ar’Rad Verse 35 and also Surah 47 Muhammad Verse 15

Another man related (his experience with the ascetics) that, “Once I saw a poor person [*fakir*] sitting on a prayer mat at the sacred mosque *Masjidil-Haram*. I had some dirhams with me, which I placed at the edge of the prayer mat. He looked at me contemptuously and said, “O dear fellow! I have bought this seating position with Allah, the Exalted by getting rid myself of thousand (of dirhams), not to speak of land and crops. Now you want to deceive me with these dirhams of yours?” Then he stood up and shook his prayer mat and went away. The dirhams scattered about and I began to pick them. I have never seen anyone nobler than him (the *fakir*) for having gone and left it (the dirhams). There is none more humble than myself for having to stay and pick up the dirhams. Here ends the paraphrase of the incident. The anecdotes in this category are many and well-known.

It is the nature of this type of people to flee the world and avoid the material world from entering into their possession once they see it approaching them. Also, it may well be the case that if one of them was told, ‘Here, take it and if you do not need it, give it out as charity’, the ascetics would then say, ‘Whoever gathered it is most suited to distribute it. The obligation is upon him for assembling it and distributing it’.”

For the second category, they do not flee from the world when it offers itself to them or presented to them. Instead, these ascetics take it and distribute it to those who deserve and in need of it and do so immediately, promptly and without delay. These are those who are firmly committed in the party of Allah and His Vicegerents among His servants. They took the sublime example in the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, and this is because he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, never fled when the world approached but spent it in the Path of Allah and placed it where Allah duly directed. Thus he used to give one person a hundred camels, and gave another person goats between two rocks, and gave al-Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, such wealth as he was unable to carry.

He, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

وَمَا يَسُرُّنِي أَنَّ لِي أُحْدِ ذَهَبًا، تَمْضِي عَلَيَّ ثَلَاثَةُ أَيَّامٍ وَعِنْدِي مِنْهُ قِيرَاطٌ إِلَّا أَنْ أَقُولَ بِهِ فِي عِبَادِ اللَّهِ هَكَذَا وَهَكَذَا.

“Then it pleases me that I have as much gold as the hill Uhud, and after three days all I have of it is but a carat, and I tell the servants of Allah, verily this is the way, this is the way.”

Then this was his, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, regular practice. He, along with his family, used to live just as the poor, that is, surviving on dates and water, and sometimes on barley bread which flour has not been sifted.

That was the same way of the Well-Guided Caliphs who came after him, namely Abu Bakar, Umar, Uthman and Ali may Allah be pleased with them all. They did not flee the world when it came to them, nor did they retain it so that they might enjoy their desires. On the contrary, they gave it away there and then, returned to their customary spare living and austerity. And their conduct in this sphere is recorded and well-known.

It has come to our knowledge that Abdullah Ibn Az-Zubair sent 100,000 dirhams to Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her and she distributed all of them as soon as they arrived and she was fasting at that time. When the maid placed before her the food to break the fast, then it was only bread and olive oil and the maid said to Aisha may Allah be pleased with her. “From what you have distributed (the money) today, you could have bought some meat with a dirham and break your fast with it!” Aisha may Allah be pleased with her said, “Why you did not remind me to do so!”

The third category of Ascetic may seek the material world and work for it but the Divine Will has not decreed that they get anything out of it, and neither will they be apportioned part of it except what suffices for them and maybe a little less than that. In any case, they are satisfied with that (Divine Will) and contented, bearing in the knowledge that Allah’s choice for them is sound and that Allah would not have removed the excess portions or worldly (goods) due to them unless He, the Exalted

willed some good for them. Once he may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ هَدِيَ إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ وَكَانَ رِزْقُهُ كَفَافًا وَقَبِعَ بِهِ.

“He is prosperous who is guided to Islam, and his sustenance is just enough and with it, he is contented.”

Once he, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said in his invocation,

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِي مَا يَكْفِينِي، وَامْنَعْ عَنِّي مَا يُطْغِينِي.

“O Allah, bestow upon me such sustenance just sufficient and withhold from me what incites me to excesses.”

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him also said,

مَنْ رَضِيَ مِنَ اللَّهِ بِالْيُسْرِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ، رَضِيَ مِنْهُ بِالْيُسْرِ مِنَ الْعَمَلِ.

“Whoever is content with the little sustenance from Allah. He (Allah) will be content with (just) a little of deeds [amal] from him.”

As for a person who seeks the world, and strives and strains in its pursuit, and does so that he can indulge in its desires and enjoy its delights, this person is considered to be pursuing worldliness, addicts craving for its desires, and thus his affair is considered grave and a cause for concern. For whosoever seeks the world with this intention is counted among those who prefer the world and who desire worldly wares. It does not matter whether he achieves his wishes or not.

If on the other hand, he seeks the world to do good and gives charity, such a person should nevertheless be reminder by saying: “O you who seeks the world to do good in addition to that, giving it up is even better and better!” How then will be the affair of the man who seeks the world to enjoy its transient passion and passing pleasure?

When seeking the world, the servant will be safe if he does so with a sense of decency and a spirit of contentment with but a little. Should he get anything more than that, he should forward it to his Hereafter, and save it for himself in the hands of his Lord.

The Poor Who Seeks the World

As for the poor who seeks the world's material gains, gathers it, hoards it after getting it, grieves immensely and sighs deeply when he misses it, then such a poor person is dispraised, worthy of blame, and does not count among those who have prospered with wealth (that is, safe on the Day of Judgment), especially if he continued to pursue his desires until he compelled himself to give up acts of obedience to his Lord and abandon the effort of making proper provisions for his life in the Hereafter. Then there is even danger lest he deserves the rebuke which says, "The most miserable is he whom Allah has given both poverty in this world and punishment in the Hereafter!!!"

Poverty with perseverance, together with patience and contentment at what Allah apportion for His creations, serenity with Allah's decree upon His servant, preferring a little instead of aplenty, and privation rather than plenty of worldly wares, these are the characteristics of those with the immense bounties and of most considerable distinctions.

As for poverty, discontent with its wrath, fretting and impatience, that is indeed one of the greatest tribulations and ordeals. Indeed, the Messenger, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him has sought protection from the poverty of this nature when he, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

"Poverty can be perilously close to unbelief" كَادَ الْفَقْرُ أَنْ يَكُونَ كُفْرًا.

Because of the person's hatred against Allah's Decree and dissatisfaction with what He has apportioned, all that adds up to ruinous sins and hideous and frightening disobedience. Let a poor man-beware! He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

يَا مَعْشَرَ الْفُقَرَاءِ، أَعْطُوا اللَّهَ الرِّضَا مِنْ قُلُوبِكُمْ تَظْفَرُوا بِبَوَابِ فَقْرِكُمْ، وَإِلَّا فَلَا.

"O assemblies of the poor show Allah a sincere satisfaction of your state, and you will earn the reward of your poverty; otherwise you would not."

Believers Face Many Tribulations

There are diseases and handicaps, a varieties of afflictions, trials and tribulations which Allah, Glorious and Exalted is He, directs to some of

His servants, in return his servants can expect reward from them, happy endings and a felicitous return, as long as they patiently persevere, and do not hate Allah's Decree upon them and do not fret about with impatience and give up. Verily Allah the Exalted says,

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ، وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ. الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ. أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ.

“Be sure We shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere. Who say, when afflicted with calamity: “To Allah, we belong, and to Him is our return” They are those on whom their Lord send blessings and Mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance.”¹

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

لَيَتَمَنَّيَنَّ أَهْلُ الْعَافِيَةِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَنْ لَوْ قُرِضَتْ أَجْسَادُهُمْ بِالْمَقَارِضِ لَمَّا يَرَوْنَ مِنْ ثَوَابِ أَهْلِ الْبَلَاءِ.

“On the Day of Judgment, those who had enjoyed well-being will wish that they were cut away with shears for the reward they will see going to those who have suffered tests and trials.”

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَا يُصِيبُ الْمُؤْمِنَ مِنْ نَصَبٍ وَلَا وَصَبٍ وَلَا هَمٍّ وَلَا حَزَنٍ وَلَا أَذًى حَتَّى الشَّوْكَةِ يُشَاكَّهَا إِلَّا اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ خَطَايَاهُ.

A believer does not suffer discomfort, hardship or illness, nor worry or grief, not even the sting which stings him except that Allah will expiate his sins for him.”

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

¹ Surah 2 al-Baqara Verse 155-157.

عُظُمُ الْجَزَاءِ مَعَ عُظُمِ الْبَلَاءِ.

“Great reward goes hand in hand with great affliction.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

يُؤْتَى بِأَهْلِ الْبَلَاءِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا يُنْصَبُ لَهُمْ مِيزَانٌ وَلَا يُنْشَرُ لَهُمْ دِيْوَانٌ، وَيُصَبُّ عَلَيْهِمُ
الثَّوَابُ صَبًّا وَيُفْرَغُ لَهُمْ إِفْرَاقًا.

“Sufferers of test and trials will be brought on the Day of Judgment and neither will the Scales be set up for them nor will the scroll be opened up; instead they will have rewards poured upon in great abundance and copiousness.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

لَا يَزُحُ الْبَلَاءُ بِالْمُؤْمِنِ حَتَّى يَمْشِيَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ وَمَا عَلَيْهِ خَطِيئَةٌ.

“Tests and trials never cease to cleave to a believer until he moves on earth without sin against him.”

He, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

إِذَا أَحَبَّ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا ۖ وَأَرَادَ أَنْ يُصَافِيَهُ صَبَّ عَلَيْهِ الْبَلَاءُ صَبًّا وَسَحَهُ سَحًّا، فَإِذَا دَعَا الْعَبْدُ وَقَالَ
يَا رَبَّاهُ، قَالَ لَبَيْكَ عَبْدِي، لَا شَيْئًا إِلَّا أَعْطَيْتَكَ، إِمَّا أَنِّي أَعْجِلُهُ لَكَ، وَإِمَّا أَنِّي أَدَّخِرُهُ لَكَ.

“When Allah loves a servant and wills (to translate him to the elect), He pours tests and trials upon him most abundantly and copiously, so when the servant then makes a supplication and says, ‘O my Lord!’ He, the Exalted says, ‘Here I am, O My servant. You will not ask anything except I will duly grant it. Either I will bestow it here and now or I will save it for you.’”

There are many records regarding the reward of those who suffer trials and persevere in the spirit of seeking reward from Allah. Such events are well-known. Nevertheless, one should not ask for tests and trials from Allah nor supplicate for them since he does not know how he will take them when they come. Perhaps he will fret with impatience and hate the Divine Decree and thus fall into sin and crisis. On the contrary,

one must ask Allah to bestow well-being upon him and do so frequently. He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَا أَوْتِيَ الْإِنْسَانُ بَعْدَ الْيَقِينِ أَفْضَلُ مِنَ الْعَافِيَةِ، وَمَا سَأَلَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى شَيْئاً أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ أَنْ يَسْأَلَ الْعَافِيَةَ.

“After establishing certainty in faith, no man has been granted something better than well-being. And Allah, the Exalted has not been asked anything more beloved to Him than being asked to grant well-being [*al'afiyah*].”

That is what a servant must supplicate from Allah, which is appropriate with his fragility. However, if Allah subject tribulations to him as He wills, then he must bear up and persevere, also to do so in the spirit of aspiring for Allah's reward and contentment with the Decree of Allah, the Exalted. He should ask his Lord, the Gentleness, the All-Prevailing Loving Kindness to grant him gentleness, together with well-being, firmness and support.

Do Not Seek Death Because of Calamity

Similarly, one should not wish for death on account of an illness that has befallen him or poverty or things like that which are part of worldly sufferings. Indeed he may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

لَا يَتَمَنَّيَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ الْمَوْتَ لِضَرِّ نَزَلَ بِهِ، فَإِنْ كَانَ لَا بُدَّ فَاعِلًا فَلْيَقُلْ: اللَّهُمَّ أَحْيِنِي مَا كَانَتْ الْحَيَاةُ خَيْرًا لِي، وَتَوَفَّنِي إِذَا كَانَ الْوَفَاةُ خَيْرًا لِي.

“None of you should wish for death on account of a calamity that has befallen him. If there is no alternative, then he should say, ‘O Lord! Keep me alive as long as life may be good for me and call me to death when death is good for me.’”

If he fears a trial [*fitnah*] in his religion, however, then there is no harm for him to wish for death. These issue has been taken and narrated by a group of Companions and the virtuous predecessors, may Allah be pleased with them.

Categories of the Praiseworthy Patience

The virtuous patience that attracts great reward is one that exercises patience in times of misfortunes, privations and worldly afflictions. Said Ibnu Abbas, may Allah be pleased with both of them, “Patience, as stated in the Quran, comes in three levels:

- Patience while fulfilling obedience to Allah, and that carries with it three hundred degrees (of excellence).
- Patience when refraining disobedience from Allah, and that carries six hundred degrees.
- Patience during misfortunes and that carries nine hundred.

A hadith narration reported,

”إِنَّمَا الصَّبْرُ عِنْدَ الصَّدْمَةِ الْأُولَى. “Verily patience is at the first blow.”

That means at the first instance when one knows that misfortune has struck, one should exercise patience. He, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَنْ أُصِيبَ بِمُصِيبَةٍ، فَقَالَ: إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ! اللَّهُمَّ أَجْرِي فِي مُصِيبَتِي وَاخْلُفْ لِي خَيْرًا مِنْهَا، إِلَّا آجَرَهُ اللَّهُ وَآخَلَفَهُ خَيْرًا مِنْهَا.

“Whoever suffers affliction and should say: ‘To Allah we belong and to Him is our return!’ O Allah, rescue me in this affliction and compensate me with something better in comparison,’ then Allah rewards him and compensates him with something better.”

He, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him narrated a hadith Qudsi, قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: مَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ قَبَضْتُ صَفِيَّةً مِنْ أَهْلِ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا الْجَنَّةَ.

“Says Allah, the Exalted, there is no other reward for he whose best friend in the world dies (or removed something he dearly loved and he remains patience), except (that he will enter) Paradise.”

Another virtuous patience is that which one exercises when persecuted by people through what they say and do. Then that is the height of patience. Patience in such a case is the character of the great,

the Imams, the elected in the realm of Prophets, the Sincere [*al-Siddiqin*], the saints and the righteous. Allah, the Exalted says to His loyal prophet, خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ.

“Hold to forgiveness; command what is right; but turn away from the ignorant.”¹

The Exalted is He says, وَلَا تَطْعِ الْكَافِرِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَدَعْ أَذَاهُمْ...

“And obey not (the behests) of the Unbelievers and the Hypocrites, and heed not their annoyances...”²

And Exalted is He told his prophets, may His blessing and peace be upon them, وَمَا لَنَا أَلَّا نَتَوَكَّلَ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدَانَا سُبُلَنَا وَلَنَصْبِرَنَّ عَلَى مَا آذَيْتُمُونَا. “No reason why we should not put our trust on Allah. Indeed He has guided us to follow the Path. We shall certainly bear with patience all the hurt you may cause us.”³

And says the Exalted in the parable about the people of Moses,

قَالُوا أُودِينَا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَأْتِيَنَا وَمِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جِئْتَنَا.

“They said: ‘We had had (nothing but) trouble, both before and after you came to us.’”⁴

Be Patience and Forgive

A person afflicted with persecution or harassment from fellow men has, therefore, a duty to be patient and persevere. Neither should he return like for like nor compensate himself even if that has been allowed to him. He should rest content with Allah’s help for him and should not invoke a curse on the one who has wronged him; he should not vilify him nor abuse him. For there is a hadith narration which recorded,

مَنْ دَعَا عَلَى مَنْ ظَلَمَهُ فَقَدْ انْتَصَرَ.

¹ Surah 7 al-Araf Verse 199.

² Surah 33 al-Ahzab Verse 48.

³ Surah 14 Ibrahim Verse 12.

⁴ Surah 7 al-Araf Verse 129.

“Whosoever supplicates against the one who has wronged him has revenged himself against him.”

Another hadith recorded,

إِنَّ الْمَظْلُومَ لَيَدْعُو عَلَى ظَالِمِهِ حَتَّى يَكْفِيَهُ ثُمَّ يَبْقَى لِلظَّالِمِ عَلَيْهِ زِيَادَةٌ يَطَالِبُهُ بِهَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، فَيَعُودُ الظَّالِمُ مُظْلُومًا وَالْمَظْلُومُ ظَالِمًا.

“The wronged party will supplicate against the person who has wronged him to the point that the wrong-doer will have a credit in his favour which will demand the wronged party to settle on the Day of Judgment: and as a result (roles will be reversed) the wrong-doer becomes the wrong party and the wronged party becomes the wrong-doer.”

It is obliged and more superior for the offender to seek forgiveness and not to keep any malaise for the offender or hope that misfortune will befall the offender, Allah, the Exalted says,

فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ.

“But if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah: for (Allah) love not those who do wrong.”¹

Exalted is He says,

وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ.

“Let them forgive and overlook. Do you not wish that Allah should forgive you? For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”²

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

يُنَادِي مُنَادٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ: لِيَقُمْ مَنْ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ! فَيَقُومُ الْعَافُونَ عَنِ النَّاسِ.

“A crier will proclaim on the Day of Judgment: ‘Let them stand up those whose reward is with Allah’; and those who stand are those who will forgive people.”

A hadith narration stated,

¹ Surah 42 ash-Shura Verse 40.

² Surah 24 Nur Verse 22.

مَنْ أُعْطِيَ فَشَكَرَ، وَمُنِعَ فَصَبَرَ، وَظَلِمَ فَعَفَرَ، وَظَلَمَ فَاسْتَعْفَرَ ثُمَّ سَكَتَ، فَقَالُوا: مَاذَا لَهُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ! فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ: أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ.

“Whosoever when given is thankful, and when denied perseveres in patience, and when wronged forgives, and when he commits a wrong, asks for forgiveness”; then he, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, fell silent. And they asked, “What does he get, O Messenger of Allah?” He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said: “For them there is peace and they are righteously guided.”

He, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,
مَا أَحَدٌ أَصْبَرَ عَلَى أَدَى يَسْمَعُهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّهُمْ لَيَدْعُونَ لَهُ وَلَكَا وَيَجْعَلُونَ لَهُ أُنْدَادًا وَهُوَ مَعَ ذَلِكَ يَعْافِيهِمْ وَيَرْزُقُهُمْ.

“None is more persevering of harassment which He hears than Allah, the Exalted, Verily, they attribute peers to Him, and nevertheless He grants them the well-being and sustenance.”

Prophet’s Patience

The Prophet may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said, “I was made to endure in Allah’s cause like no one less had suffered, and I was made to fear like no one less had feared. Once thirty nights and days passed, yet Bilal and I had no food to eat that would relieve the hunger of a living man, except something that would fit in Bilal’s armpit!”¹

Imam al-Qushairi reported in his *Risalah Qushairiyah* together with its chain of transmitters, that, “Once Fatimah, may Allah be pleased with her, approached the Messenger, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, with a piece of bread. And he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said, ‘What is this O Fatimah?’ She said: ‘A piece of bread I baked, and I did not feel good until I brought it to you.’ Then he may

¹ A small portion of food, like a piece of bread, that is hid in Bilal’s armpit so the public would not see him bringing the food to share with the Prophet.

Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said, 'Do you realise that it is the first food to have entered your father's mouth for the last three days?'

In another narration, she complained to the Messenger of Allah may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, about the hardship she encountered when grinding (the flour), fetching the water and other household chores. She then asked him may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, for a servant, he, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said to her, "How can I give you a servant and abandon the poor people [*ahlus-Shuffat*¹]?" Then he ordered her as well as Ali, may Allah honour him, that when they go to bed at night to recite, *Tasbih* [*Subhanallah*] 'Glory to Allah' 33 times and *Tahmid* [*Alhamdulillah*] 'Praise and thanks belongs' to Allah' 33 times and *Takbir* [*Allahu Akbar*] 'Allah is Great' 34 times. Then he may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said, "That is better for you than a servant."

Ascetic of the Prophet

It used to be the case that a period of two months, between two moons sighting, when the Messenger, may Allah's blessings and peace upon him, as well as upon his family, live without a fire being lighted to cook food or for any other purpose. Then they used to live on dates and water.

Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, once said, "The family of Muhammad may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, never ate until they are satisfied for any three days until he passed away."

Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them, once said: "The Messenger of Allah may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, used to pass successive nights with his family without supper, and most of their bread was made from barley [*sya`iir*]."

Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with them, once related, "We went out with the Messenger of Allah may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, until we entered the dates-palm groves of the Ansar (people of Medina) and he began picking updates from the ground and eating it.

¹ *Ahlus - Suffat*: The people of the bench, the poor living around the Masjid Nabawi and seeking shelter there.

And then he may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said, to me, 'O ibn Umar! Why you do not eat?' I answered: 'I have no appetite for it, O Messenger of Allah'. Then he may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said, 'As for me, I do want it because this is the fourth morning since I last tasted food. Then if I wished I would supplicate my Lord, Great and Glorious is He, and He would give me the kingdoms of Persia and Rome. Then how would you be, O son of Umar, if you were to remain among folk who hide away the sustenance of a year yet weak in their certainty in (their Lord).

The son of Umar continued the narration, 'In the Name of Allah no sooner (had he said that) then the (following) verse was revealed,

وَكَايْنٍ مَنْ دَابَّةٍ لَا تَحْمِلُ رِزْقَهَا اللَّهُ يَرْزُقُهَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ.

"How many are the creatures that carry not their sustenance? It is Allah Who feeds (both) them and you, for He hears and knows (all things)."¹

Then said the Messenger may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said, "Verily Allah had not commanded me to treasure up worldly good nor to pursue desires: and whosoever treasures up a dinar (as security against) the remainder of his life, certainly life is in the hands of Allah, Exalted and Glorious is He. Lo and behold, I hoard neither dinar nor dirham nor hide sustenance for tomorrow."

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,
عَرَضَ عَلَيَّ رَبِّي لِيَجْعَلَ لِي بَطْحَاءَ مَكَّةَ ذَهَبًا، قُلْتُ: لَا يَا رَبِّ! وَلَكِنْ أَشْبِعُ يَوْمًا وَأَجُوعُ يَوْمًا، فَإِذَا جُعْتُ تَصَرَّعْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَذَكَرْتُكَ، وَإِذَا شَبِعْتُ شَكَرْتُكَ وَحَمَدْتُكَ.

"My Lord offered to turn the sand in the valleys of Mecca into gold for me, and I said, 'No, O Lord, I would rather eat enough to mute the pangs of hunger one day and go without food the next. When I famished, I submit to You in fervent humility and invoke Your Name, and when I have had enough to mute the pangs of hunger, I offer gratitude, praise and thanks to You."

¹ Surah 29 al-Ankabut Verse 60.

al-Hassan al-Bisri, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “*Rasulullah* may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, used not to spare even himself while meeting the needs of the people, so much so that (as a result) he would patch his girdle with ‘hide’. It was not his habit to have both the morning meal and supper for three successive days; and he (upheld) that tradition until he was called to Allah, Glorious and Great is He.”

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَزَادَهُ شَرَفًا وَكَرَامَةً لِدِيهِ

May Allah bless him and grant him peace
And augment his honour and high esteem before Him.



Chapter Six

The Sixth Category

دَعْوَةُ الْآتِبَاعِ مِنَ الْأَوْلَادِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْمَمَالِكِ

A Call to the Followers Including the Children, Wives and Servants

They are the followers; namely children relate to their parents, wives with husbands and servants or slaves with their masters, a word of counsel and reminder, a warning and caution for them.

Now, know that these (categories of people) are on the whole under the guardianship of others. Thus the divine obligations resting upon them are more numerous and more emphasised than the responsibilities that favour them, and which rest with their guardians including parents, husbands and owners (or employers). Even they, on the whole, have obligations due to the guardians.

Parents' rights over children

As for obligations existing between children and their parents, verily Allah the Exalted and Glorious says,

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۖ إِنَّمَا يُبَلِّغَنَّ عِندَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا. ۖ وَاحْفَظْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا.

“Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him and that you be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age during your life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour. And out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: “My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy as they cherished me in childhood.” ”¹

Then the Exalted says,

وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا.

“And We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents,”²

The Exalted also says, أَفَإِنْ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ.

“Show gratitude to Me and to your parents: to Me is (your final) Goal.”³

The Exalted says,

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا وَحَمْلُهُ وَفَصَالُهِ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ.

“We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents: in pain did his mother bear him, and in pain did she give him birth. The carrying of the (child) to his weaning is (a period of) thirty months. At length, when he reaches the age of full strength and attains forty years, he says: “O my Lord! Grant me that I may be grateful for Your favour which You have bestowed upon me, and upon both my parents and that I may work righteousness such as You may approve; and be gracious to me in my issue. Truly have I turn to You and truly do I bow (to You) in Islam.”⁴

¹ Surah 17 al-Israa Verses 23-24.

² Surah 3 Al Nisaa Verse 36.

³ Surah 31 Lukman Verse 14.

⁴ Surah 46 al-Ahqaf Verse 15.

From Ibn Mas'ud, may Allah have mercy on him, who said, "I once asked the Messenger, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, "Which actions are most beloved to Allah?" He replied, "Prayers at the appointed time". And I asked, "Then which?" "Be kind to the two parents".

And I asked, "Then which?" He replied, "Jihad in the path of Allah."

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him also said,

لَا يَجْزِي وَلَدٌ وَالِدَهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَجِدَهُ مَمْلُوكًا فَيَشْتَرِيهِ فَيُعْتِقَهُ.

"A child will not be able to recompense his parents until as if he finds his father in bondage then buys him and sets him free!"

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him also said,

رِضَا اللَّهِ فِي رِضَا الْوَالِدَيْنِ، وَسَخَطُ اللَّهِ فِي سَخَطِ الْوَالِدَيْنِ.

"The pleasure [*redha*] of Allah is in the pleasure of the two parents, and His wrath is in the wrath of the two parents."

It is narrated in a *Hadith Qudsi* that the Blessed and Exalted says,

مَنْ أَصْبَحَ مُرْضِيًّا لَوَالِدَيْهِ مُسَخِطًا لِي فَأَنَا عَنْهُ رَاضٍ، مَنْ أَصْبَحَ مُرْضِيًّا لِي مُسَخِطًا لَوَالِدَيْهِ فَأَنَا عَنْهُ سَاخِطٌ.

"Whosoever reaches the morning having pleased his parents and displeased me, and certainly I am pleased with him. And whosoever having pleased Me and displeased his two parents, verily with him I am displeased."

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

الْوَالِدُ وَسَطُ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ، فَإِنْ شِئْتَ فَأُضِعْ ذَلِكَ الْبَابُ أَوْ أَحْفَظْهُ.

"The father is like the centre of the doors leading to paradise. So is it your wish to abandon that door or protect it."

Once a man came to the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, and asked, "O Messenger of Allah! What is the obligation of the two parents upon their child?" Then he, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him answered, "They are your Paradise and your Hell."

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَنْ سَرَّهُ أَنْ يُمَدَّ لَهُ فِي عُمُرِهِ وَيُزَادَ لَهُ فِي رِزْقِهِ فَلْيَبْرِّ وَالِدَيْهِ وَلْيَصِلْ رَحْمَهُ.

“Whosoever is pleased with having his life extended and his sustenance increased, should be kind to his two parents and nourish the ties of kinship.”

A man said, “O Messenger of Allah, my father wanted to take my wealth.” Following which he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him replied, “Both you and your wealth belong to your father.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him also said,

بُرُّوا آبَاءَكُمْ تَبَرَّكُمْ أَبْنَاؤُكُمْ. وَعِفُّوا تَعِفَّ نِسَاؤُكُمْ.

“Be kind to your parents and your children will be kind to you and be chaste and your spouses will likewise be chaste.”

He may blessings and peace be upon him said, “Despite it, despite it, nevertheless it is he who will be despair!” A companion asked, “O Messenger of Allah! Who is it?” He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him answered, “Whosoever finds his two parents either both of them or one of them in old age, but does not enter Paradise.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him also said,

أَكْبَرُ الْكَبَائِرِ ثَلَاثٌ: الْإِشْرَاكُ بِاللَّهِ، وَعُقُوقُ الْوَالِدَيْنِ، وَقَوْلُ الزُّورِ أَوْ شَهَادَةُ الزُّورِ.

The greatest of the cardinal sins are three, joining partners to Allah, unkindness to the two parents and uttering falsehood or giving false evidence.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him also said,

“Accursed is he who is unkind to his two parents.” مَلْعُونٌ مَنْ عَقَّ وَالِدَيْهِ.

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him also said,

كُلُّ الذُّنُوبِ يُؤَخَّرُ اللَّهُ مِنْهَا مَا شَاءَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، إِلَّا عُقُوقُ الْوَالِدَيْنِ فَإِنَّهُ يُعَجِّلُهُ لِصَاحِبِهِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ قَبْلَ الْمَمَاتِ.

“Allah may defer the penalty of every sin as He wills to the Day of Judgement except unkindness to the two parents. Indeed, He expedites so that those guilty of it will suffer its penalty in life before death.”

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him also said,
يَا مَعْشَرَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَصَلُّوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ، فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنْ ثَوَابٍ أَسْرَعَ مِنْ صَلَّةِ الرَّحِمِ،
وَأَيَّائِكُمْ وَالْبَغْيِ فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنْ عُقُوبَةٍ أَسْرَعَ مِنْ عُقُوبَةِ الْبَغْيِ. وَأَيَّائِكُمْ وَعُقُوبَةُ الْوَالِدَيْنِ
فَإِنَّ رِيحَ الْجَنَّةِ يُوجَدُ مِنْ مُسِيرَةِ أَلْفِ عَامٍ، وَاللَّهُ لَا يَجِدُهَا عَاقٌ لَوَالِدَيْهِ، وَلَا قَاطِعٌ رَحِمٍ،
وَلَا شَيْخٌ زَانَ وَلَا جَارٌ إِزَارَهُ خِيَلَاءَ، إِنَّمَا الْكِبَرِيَاءُ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ. وَالْكَذِبُ كُلُّهُ إِثْمٌ إِلَّا
مَا نَفَعَتْ بِهِ مُؤْمِنًا أَوْ دَفَعَتْ بِهِ عَنْ دِينٍ.

“O assembly of Muslims: be mindful of your duties to Allah, join the ties of kith and kin for surely there is no reward which registers more quickly than that, and beware of tyranny against men for there is no sin whose penalty is more prompt than the penalty of tyranny, and beware of unkindness to the two parents, for certainly the fragrance of Paradise is to be found within a distance of a thousand years. Nevertheless in the Name of Allah, he who is unkind to his two parents will not find it, neither will he who does not join the ties of kinship nor will a fornicating old person, nor he who arrogantly trails his girdle behind him (like a great man of importance). For surely, Greatness is that of Allah, the Lord of all creation, for sure all lies are sin except that whereby a believer benefits or defend his religion.”

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him also said,
ثَلَاثَةٌ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِمُ الْجَنَّةَ: مُدْمِنُ الْخَمْرِ، وَالْعَاقُ لَوَالِدَيْهِ، وَالذَّيْوُثُ الَّذِي يُفَرُّ
الْحُبَّتْ فِي أَهْلِهِ.

“To three persons Allah the Exalted has denied Paradise: the liquor addict, those unkind to his parents and the pimp [*dayyuth*] who endorses lack of chastity in his wife.”

Obligation to Parents

You should know that the responsibility to the two parents is among essential duties and kindness to them is one of the vital deeds, the closest to a pious act, the utmost obedience act of worship to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. Also, know that unkindness to them and neglect of their

obligation is among the most hideous of sins and the greatest of the cardinal sins and the ugliest of things forbidden. You have a bounden duty, may Allah show you mercy, to know the obligation of the two parents and to uphold kindness to them in the spirit of beneficence. Beware, and again beware of showing unkindness to them and disregard towards their obligation. Do your utmost to earn their satisfaction, pleasure and dedicate yourself to their obedience happiness and good cheer. Do that in every way you can and do that with beneficence. Then devote your attention (with care) to avoid everything that annoys them, is burdensome to them and draws (one) to their displeasure. You should seek assistance from Allah and patiently persevere as Allah the Exalted mentioned,

وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ.

“And no one will be granted such goodness except those who exercise patience and self-restraint, none but persons of the greatest good fortune.”¹

Obligation to the mother

You should know that the duty of kindness to the mother exceeds that of the father. Perhaps the reason is what she suffers in the way of the burdens of pregnancy, the delivery, the extra love and sympathy plus the responsibility of suckling and upbringing et cetera.

When someone asked (as narrated in a hadith): “Who has the greatest rights to beneficent service of kindness?” He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him answered, “Your mother, then your mother, then your mother and then your father, then those who are respectively close and respectively close’.”

One perfects the duty of kindness to the two parents when one establishes links with their kith and kin [*silaturrahmim*], their friends and those dear to them. He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

أَبْرُ الْبِرِّ أَنْ يَصِلَ الرَّجُلُ أَهْلَ وَدِّ أَبِيهِ.

¹ Surah 41 Fussilat Verse 35.

“The most beneficent kindness is for one to nourish links with those dear to one’s father.”

A Hadith narration said, مَنْ حُسِّنَ بَرُّ الْوَالِدَيْنِ صَلَّاهُ الرَّحْمَ الْأَيُّ لَا تُوصَلُ إِلَّا بِهِمَا.

“Among the beneficent kindness to the two parents is that which takes care of kinsfolk who are inseparably theirs.”

Helping the Children in Their Duties

The two parents must assist their children in their duty of kindness with constant forgiveness. More so in this day and age when unkindness is prevalent and kindness and the kind are but few. Also, by being less demanding of their rights and perfect generosity from the children, they help them not to be drawn into difficulties and Allah’s displeasure. They should take heed of the prayer of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, when he said,

رَحِمَ اللَّهُ وَالِدًا أَعَانَ وَلَدَهُ عَلَى بَرِّهِ.

“May Allah show mercy to a parent who helps his child fulfil kindness towards him”

Educate Your Children

The parents also have an obligated duty to bring up their children beneficently, educate them, to teach good manners in them, to protect them from wicked companions and from mixing with evil people. It is also their obligated duty to plant in them the knowledge of the Truth [*al-Haqq*] and the religion, the love of goodness and enthusiasm to do what is right, to sow in them a hatred of the people of falsehood [*al-Batil*], wickedness, evilness and evil people. All this so that they grow up accordingly (conforming to Islam) because their desire and craving become that much greater when they are adults. They will then know what goodness, virtuousness, beneficence, the value of avoiding evilness and wickedness is.

Establish Family Ties

Now, in as much as one is obliged to be kind to one’s parents and avoid unkindness to them, one has also to nourish links with one’s kith and kin.

For joining relationships with one's kinsfolk is among the most urgent matters in religion. And they (the kinsfolk - relatives) are those whom Allah, the Great and Glorious, has commanded that one should establish a link with, in His words, the Great and Glorious says,

وَالَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ وَيَخَافُونَ سُوءَ الْحِسَابِ.

“Those who join together those things which Allah hath commanded to be joined, hold their Lord in awe, and fear the terrible reckoning¹;”

Allah, Glorious and Exalted is He has pronounced a curse upon those who cut off links with their kinsfolk in His words,

فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَنْ تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَتُقَطِّعُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ. أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فَأَصَمَّهُمْ وَأَعَمَّى أَبْصَارَهُمْ.

“Then, is it to be expected of you if ye were put in authority, that you will make mischief, in the land, and break your ties of kith and kin? Such are the men whom Allah has cursed for He has made them deaf and blinded their sight².”

In a *Hadith Qudsi*, Allah, the Exalted says,

هِيَ الرَّحْمُ وَأَنَا الرَّحْمَنُ، شَقَقْتُ لَهَا اسْمًا مِنْ اسْمِي، فَمَنْ وَصَلَهَا وَصَلْتُهُ، وَمَنْ قَطَعَهَا قَطَعْتُهُ.

“Verily, they are the kinsfolk, and I am the Most Merciful [*ar-Rahman*]. I have originated their name from My Name. And whosoever nourishes [*silaturrahim*] them, him I shall nourish, and whosoever severs them, him I shall sever.”

In another *Hadith Qudsi*, Allah the Exalted says,

رَحِمُ حِينَ قَامَتْ فَقَالَتْ هَذَا مَقَامُ الْعَائِدِ بَكَ مِنَ الْقَطِيعَةِ؟ أَمَا تَرْضَيْنِ أَنْ أَصِلَ مِنْ وَصْلِكَ وَأَقْطَعَ مِنْ قَطْعِكَ.

“When the womb [*ar-Rahimi*] stood up and said, ‘Is this the position of he who is protected by you from severance?’ the Exalted said, ‘Will it not please you (to know) that I will nourish whosoever nourishes you and sever (ties with) whosoever severs you.’”

¹ Surah 13 ar-Rad Verse 21.

² Surah 47 Muhammad Verses 22-23.

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَنْ سَرَّهُ أَنْ يُنْسَأَ لَهُ فِي أَجَلِهِ وَيُبْسَطَ لَهُ فِي رِزْقِهِ فَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ وَلْيَصِلْ رَحْمَهُ.

“Whosoever is happy to have his life scale extended, and his sustenance made abundant should have been mindful of their duties towards Allah [taqwa] and nourish ties with his kith and kin.”

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ قَاطِعٌ رَحِمٍ.

“He does not enter Paradise who severs ties of kith and kin.”

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

لَا تَنْزِلُ الرَّحْمَةُ عَلَى قَوْمٍ فِيهِمْ قَاطِعٌ رَحِمٍ.

“Mercy does not descend upon a people amongst whom there is a severer of ties of kith and kin.”

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

صَلُّوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ وَلَوْ بِالسَّلَامِ.

“Nourish ties with your kith and kin even with greetings of peace [salam].

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

أَفْضَلُ الصَّدَقَةِ عَلَى ذِي الرَّحِمِ الْكَاشِحُ.

“The best of charity [sadaqa] is that given to the malicious relative.”

That is to be kind to a relative even though the person continues to harbour ill will against you. He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

الصَّدَقَةُ عَلَى الْقَرَابَةِ صَدَقَةٌ وَصِلَةٌ.

“A charity [sadaqa] to relatives is both charity and a joining of ties.”

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيَصِلْ رَحْمَهُ.

“Whosoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should nourish ties with his relatives.”

Husband's Rights Over Wives

As for women, as well as spouses, their (husband) rights over them (wives) are their duty-bound and many obligations. More so as the status of men and women is what Allah describes in His Glorious Book, Blessed and Exalted is He when He says,

وَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ.

And women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable; but men have a degree (of advantage) over them, for Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise¹.

He Glorious and Exalted is He says,

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ.

“Men are the protectors and maintainers of women because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other and because they support them from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient and guard in (the husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard.²”

The Messenger may blessings and peace be upon him said,

لَوْ كَانَ يَنْبَغِي لَشَرُّ أَنْ يَسْجُدَ لِشَرٍّ لِأَمَرَتِ الْمَرْأَةُ تَسْجُدُ لِرَوْحِهَا إِذَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا لِمَا فَضَّلَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا.

“If it were proper for a human being to prostrate to another human being, I would command the woman to bow to her husband when he enters because of the degree of status he has over her granted by Allah.”

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

إِذَا صَلَّتِ الْمَرْأَةُ خَمْسَهَا وَصَامَتْ شَهْرَهَا وَحَفِظَتْ فَرْجَهَا وَأَطَاعَتْ زَوْجَهَا قِيلَ لَهَا أُدْخِلِي مَنْ أَيَّ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ شِئْتَ.

¹ Surah 2 al-Baqara Verse 228.

² Surah 4 an Nisaa Verse 34.

“When a woman prays her five prayers and fasts her month of Ramadan and keeps her nuptials on guard and obeys her husband, she will be told, “Enter through any door of the doors of Paradise you wish.”

He, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

أَيُّمَا أَمْرَأَةً مَاتَتْ وَزَوْجُهَا عَنْهَا رَاضٍ دَخَلَتْ الْجَنَّةَ.

“Any lady who dies while her husband is satisfied with her enters Paradise.”

Once a lady came to the Messenger of Allah may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, and said, “O Messenger of Allah! I am a representative of ladies to you. The ladies, whether conscious or not, would earnestly want me to see you (to clarify their status). Allah is the Lord of men and women, and you are the Messenger of Allah to men and women. Allah has prescribed Jihad on men and if they accomplished it, they get rewarded and advancement, and if the person dies as martyrs, they are alive in their presence of their Lord and there get sustenance. And what do you put on the same level as these deeds of theirs as compare to obedience?”

He replied, “Obedience to their husbands and knowledge of their obligation. However, only a few of you do that!”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him also said,

وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ، لَا تُؤَدِّي الْمَرْأَةُ حَقَّ رَبِّهَا حَتَّى تُؤَدِّيَ حَقَّ زَوْجِهَا، وَلَوْ سَأَلَهَا نَفْسُهَا وَهِيَ عَلَى ظَهَرِ فَتَبَ بَعِيرٍ لَمْ تَمْنَعَهُ.

“In the Name of He, Whose Hand the life of Muhammad is in; a woman has not discharged her obligation to her Lord until she discharge the obligation of her husband, even if he were to ask her to submit herself while she was on the back of the camel’s saddle, she should not refuse.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

لَا يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى إِلَى أَمْرَأَةٍ لَا تَشْكُرُ زَوْجَهَا وَهِيَ لَا تَسْتَغْنِي عَنْهُ.

“Allah, Bless and Exalted is He, does not look upon a woman with mercy who does not thank her husband and yet she cannot do without him.”

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

إِذَا دَعَا الرَّجُلُ امْرَأَتَهُ إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ فَلَمْ تَأْتِهِ فَبَاتَ عَلَيْهَا غَضَبًا لَعَنَتَهَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى تُصْبِحَ.

“When a man calls a woman to his bed, and she does not go, and he passes the night angry at her, the angels will invoke a curse upon her until morning breaks.”

Among the husband's rights upon the wife is that:

- she does not allow into his house someone he does not like;
- she should not go out without his permission;
- she does not fast the additional fast except with his consent;
- she protects his reputation regarding herself and his property;
- she keeps a competent eye upon his children and his servants;
- she behaves well that he hears nothing from her except that which is good;
- he does not see her except what is beneficence;
- he does not smell her except that which is fragrant;
- she should be ready and willing at any time he may wish to have an intimacy with her, except when she has an excuse of menstruation or illness or something similar;
- she should be kindly and gently companionable and well disposed to his relatives and to people who associate with him.

Wives' rights over husbands

The obligations of the spouse upon the husband are essential and many. Just as he has the rights upon her, she also has rights upon him: namely spending on her, clothing her and conducting dealings with her based on kindness and equity. Indeed he may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

خَيَارُكُمْ خَيَارُكُمْ لِنِسَائِهِمْ.

“The most righteous of you are those who are most righteous to their ladies.”

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ وَأَنَا خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِي.

“The most righteous of you are the most righteous to their spouses, and I am the most righteous to my spouse.”

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

اَسْتَوْصُوا بِالنِّسَاءِ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّمَا هُنَّ عَوَانٍ عِنْدَكُمْ، أَخَذْتُمُوهُنَّ بِأَمَانَةِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى، وَاسْتَخْلَلْتُمْ فَرُوجَهُنَّ بِكَلِمَةِ اللَّهِ.

“Advice and bequeath to your women well because they are like your prisoners and subdued to you. You have taken them as a trust from Allah, the Exalted, and made their private parts are deemed permissible upon the Word of Allah.”

In another narration he may blessings and peace be upon him said,

إِنَّ الْمَرْأَةَ خُلِقَتْ مِنْ ضِلْعٍ أَعْوَجَ، وَإِنْ أَعْوَجَ مَا فِي الضِّلْعِ أَعْلَاهُ، فَإِنْ ذَهَبَتْ تُقِيمُهُ كَسَرْتَهُ، وَإِنْ اسْتَمْتَعَتْ بِهِ اسْتَمْتَعَتْ بِهِ عَلَى عَوْجِهِ. فَاسْتَوْصُوا بِالنِّسَاءِ خَيْرًا.

“Verily a woman has been created from a crooked rib, and the most crooked part of a rib is its top; and if you attempt to straighten it, you will break it. So when you are having a good time with her, take pleasure with her when she is still crooked. Therefore be advice to bequeath her well and act kindly to women.”

Verily, the Prophet may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him had reiterated this advice regarding women in several other hadiths. (So be mindful of these responsibilities.) He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

لَنْ يَفْرَكَ مُؤْمِنٌ مُؤْمِنَةً. إِنْ كَرِهَ مِنْهَا خُلُقًا رَضِيَ مِنْهَا بَآخَرَ.

“A believing man should not hate a believing woman; indeed if he dislikes one character in her, he will be pleased with another.

Thus when man deals with them, he needs patience, a willingness to overlook, and tactfulness, and this is because they have been created from weakness. In described them (women) as being wanting in

intelligence and religion, he may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَا رَأَيْتُ أَغْلَبَ لِلرَّجُلِ الْحَازِمُ مِنْكَ.

“I have not seen anyone more overpowering to a steady-fast man than you (referring to the women),” or so he, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said.

Then further he may blessings and peace be upon him said,

الصَّبْرُ عَنْهُمْ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الصَّبْرِ عَلَيْهِمْ. وَالصَّبْرُ عَلَيْهِمْ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الصَّبْرِ عَلَى النَّارِ.

“Being patience about their behaviour is better than enduring their reactions (if we had reacted towards their behaviour), and being patient about their action (we restrain from using our strength against them) is better than enduring hell-fire.”

Compromising with Woman

A man needed to be tolerant and always forgive the woman for her mistakes or difficulties she faced in the discharging of her duties on towards him. But he should not forgive her in neglecting the duties of Allah which are binding on her, namely the prescribed prayers, ritual cleansing after *coition* [*ghusl al-janabah*], guarding (covering) herself from other men, from making a dazzling display to other than her husband and close relatives [*mahram*], and this is because the perfect man is he who forgives violations of his obligations but does not forgive the dereliction of the duties of Allah, disregard for His religion and the upholding of His sanctities, and the imperfect man is he who is the opposite of that. So take a measure of yourself accordingly as well as others.

Protect the Women

In these trying times, it is common that the dazzling display has overwhelmed women, so has the lack of sense of shame and the trait of preserving one's reputation. There is no hiding of this fact.

It is therefore imperative every Muslim who holds Allah in awe, reverence and adoration to do his utmost to guard and protect them. He

should not confine himself to what he is able and can do. It is binding upon every religious person, who is ardently anxious about his religion to protect his faith, his person with a wife who keeps his chaste and guards his private parts. He should respond to the saying of Rasulullah may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him,

يَا مَعْشَرَ الشَّبَابِ! مَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ مِنْكُمُ الْبَاءَةَ (يَعْنِي النِّفَقَةَ) فَعَلَيْهِ بِالنِّكَاحِ فَإِنَّهُ أَغْضُ لِلْبَصَرِ وَأَخْصَنُ لِلْفَرْجِ. وَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَعَلَيْهِ بِالصَّوْمِ فَإِنَّهُ لَهُ وَجَاءٌ.

“O young men, those of you who can support a household should marry, for it meant to induce you to lower your gaze (from the prohibitions) and more protective of the private parts. However, for those who cannot, they should fast for that is a means of subduing sexual desire.”

Emphatically, marriage is binding upon the young over whom sexual desire is a ruling passion. As for the people dedicated to worshipping and religion, given up to *ibadah*, those preoccupied with the important affairs of religion like knowledge [*ilm*] and deeds, what is best and most suitable to do or not to do is clear to them. For they have an insight into Allah's religion which reveals to them what is best and most appropriate in their case. They also place themselves under such self-discipline and impose such ethical austerities on their limbs that secure them from falling into what displeases Allah, the Exalted

Every man is aware of the evidence against himself. Indeed, these times have witnessed degeneration (of morals), the excesses are hideous, people have abandoned the mould of righteous and deviated from the truth [*al-Haqq*] and religion, save for those whom Allah wills, and they are indeed a few, verily Allah is the One from Whom aid is to be sought, and there is no resources nor power except by the Will of Allah. A narrated hadith quoted,

يَأْتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ يَكُونُ هَلَاكُ الرَّجُلِ فِيهِ عَلَى يَدِ آبَوَيْهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ أَبَوَانِ فَعَلَى يَدِ زَوْجَتِهِ وَأَوْلَادِهِ، يُعَيِّرُونَهُ بِالْفَقْرِ حَتَّى يَدْخُلُ مَدَاحِلَ السُّوءِ. أَوْ كَمَا وَرَدَ.

“A time will overtake people in which the ruin of a man will be in the hands of his two parents, and if he does not have two parents then it will

be in the hands of his wife and children nag him with poverty to the point that he barges into dens of evils.” or as it was reported.

Said al-Hasaan al-Bisry, may Allah mercy be upon him, “No man takes to obeying his wife in what she desires except that Allah will prostrate him into Hell.” Once the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him was asked in these words, “When you passed away, which is better for us, (living on) the earth or (dead and buried in) its womb?”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him answered, “When your rulers are your righteous, your wealthy are your gracious and gentle, and your affairs decided through mutual consultation then (living on) the back of the earth is better for you than (being buried in) its womb. However, when your rulers are your wicked, your wealthy are your misers and your affairs entrusted to your women then (being buried in) the womb of the earth is better for you than (living on) its back.”

The Righteous Lady

It is clear that a righteous woman is a help in religion, and that the non-righteous woman is a diversion from faith. Indeed, in a hadith, the Prophet may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

فَاطْفِرُ بَذَاتِ الدِّينِ تَرَبَّتْ يَدَاكَ.

“Do indeed marry she who is wedded to religion.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,
الدُّنْيَا مَتَاعٌ، وَخَيْرُ مَتَاعِهَا الْمَرْءَةُ الصَّالِحَةُ، الَّتِي إِنْ نَظَرْتَ إِلَيْهَا سَرَّتَكَ، وَإِنْ غَبَتْ عَنْهَا حَفِظْتَكَ فِي مَالِكَ وَفِي نَفْسِهَا.

“The world is a means of enjoyment, and its best source of enjoyment is the righteous woman who when you look at her, delights you and when you are away from her, protects you in your property and herself.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

أَعْظَمُ النِّسَاءِ بَرَكَةً أَحْفَهِنَّ مَوْوَنَةً.

“Women with immense blessings are the least burdensome.”

And whenever a man finds a virtuous woman who helps him in his religion and the affairs of the Hereafter, marriage becomes the most appropriate for him and the best counsel, otherwise refraining is better plus exclusive dedication to *ibadah*, and relieving oneself from the burden of women is the best course and of most beneficent consequence. It has been recorded in a Hadith that:

خَيْرُكُمْ بَعْدَ الْمِائَتَيْنِ الْخَفِيفَ الْحَازِ، الَّذِي لَا أَهْلَ لَهُ وَلَا وَلَدٌ.

“The best of you after the two hundred is he who the light of burden, he who has neither wife nor children.”

Among the previous virtuous woman from among the righteous predecessors, whenever she sees her husband looking worried, she used to tell him: “If you are worried on account of the Hereafter, may Paradise be your lot; if however, it is the affairs of the world, we do not demand of you what you cannot do.”

Rabi’ah of Sham, the wife of Sheikh Ahmad bin Abul Hawari¹, may Allah be pleased with him used to feed him good food and perfume him and tell him: “Go with your strength to your wife.” He used to have another wife apart from her. Once the Isha’ prayer is over, she used to perfume herself and put on her beautiful dress and come to his bed and ask him: “Do you have any desire upon me?” If he needed her (then she would stay), otherwise she would take off the unique dress and stand on her prayer mat to pray until morning breaks. And it was she who invited Ibn Abul Hawari to marry her, and this is because she had a husband before him who died and she inherited wealth. And she wanted Ibn Abul Hawari to spend that wealth on the people of religion, the virtuous and feeding people and in that manner. A man is more appropriate for that and more competent than a woman. For that reason, she invited him to marry her, may Allah show mercy to both of them.

¹ Abul Hawari name is Abdullah bin Maimun from the city of Damascus. His son, Ahmad, is a companion of Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani, Sufyan bin Uyainah and a group of Master Teachers [*Mashaik*]. He is among the cognisant [*Arifin*], devout and pious [*Wara’*] from a family that piety and ascetics. Aljunied once equate him with the aroma of Syria. He passed away in 240H.

There are many narrations of virtuous women among those who tread the righteous path [*salaf saleh*].

It has come to our knowledge that when Fath Al-Maushili¹ may Allah be please with him used to go on pilgrimage or some other trip, many ladies would go to his wife and express sympathy and try to console her because he will be away from her and his dependants.

She would said, “Verily Fath was not a bestower of sustenance, but he used to eat from what was given to him by way of sustenance. Gone then is the consumer of sustenance; however, Allah Who gives sustenance is still here, and He is Allah, the Exalted, and with Allah is the enabling grace and assistance.”

Rights of the Slaves and Bondsmen

As for slaves and bondsmen among the most emphasised and most essential things binding them, that is after the obligations to Allah upon them plus the commandments of His religion, after these they (slaves) have to obey their masters, serve them and be sincere to them. They should conduct themselves (concerning their masters) as servants to Allah and in whose hands Allah has placed their sustenance and willed them to become slaves and dependents. In doing that to their masters, they earn the immense reward; however, on the other hand, there is (recorded against them) enormous sins if they do not. Many hadiths and words of the Companions have been recorded in this connection. He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

الْمَمْلُوكُ الَّذِي يُؤَدِّي رَّبَّهُ تَعَالَى وَحَقَّ سَيِّدُهُ يُؤْتَى أَجْرُهُ مَرَّتَيْنِ.

“The slave who discharges the obligation of His Lord, the Exalted, and the obligation of his master get rewarded twice.”

Abu Hurairah may Allah be pleased with him said, “Were it not for the pilgrimage, Jihad and kindliness to my mother I would love to be a slave,” meaning that there is the immense reward in that.

¹ His full name is Abu Muhammad Al-Fath bin Said Al-Maushili from the same period as Bisyr Al-Hafi and Sariy As-Saqathi. He is an expert in matter concerning piety [*wara*] and conduct to bring oneself closer to Allah [*Muaamalat*].

Now, a slave must be beneficently sincere to his masters and to live fully to the trust he places in him regarding his property and (similar task), to render him service as much as he is able without laziness nor shortfall.

The Master must protect the rights of the Slave

The master must spend on the slave and clothe him. He should not compel him to do work which he is unable to; neither should he abuse him nor beat him unlawfully.

Whenever there is need to punish him about a matter that has nothing to do with righteousness and uprightness in his religion, or about compulsory service to his master, then let him do so gently without imposing too many difficulties and burdens upon the slave. The reason being that if the master does exceed prescribed limits, his sins and makes impositions, such that his servant will ask for compensation from him in the Next Abode, as stated in the Hadith.

However, if he forgives and overlooks that, is for the best, except for cases where beating and punishment fulfil the best, clear interest and failure draws manifest harm upon the master or the slave.

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him was asked, "How many times should a slave be forgiven every day?" Then he may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him replied, "Seventy times."

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said, to a servant who has failed in a specific matter:

لَوْلَا خَوْفُ الْقَصَاصِ لِأَوْجَعْتِكَ بِهَذَا السِّوَاكِ.

"Were it not for fear of reprisal (of the Hereafter) I would have beaten (you) with this piece of Arak." (*siwak* - a branch used for toothbrush).

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,

لِلْمَمْلُوكِ نَفَقَتُهُ وَكِسْوَتُهُ، وَالْأَلَّ يُكَلِّفُ مَا يَغْلِبُهُ.

"A slave has a right to money to spend, clothing, and not to be compelled to beyond what he can (that is in the services)."

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,
 هُمْ إِخْوَانُكُمْ مَلِكُكُمْ اللَّهُ إِيَّاهُمْ، وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَمَلَكْتَهُمْ إِيَّاكُمْ، فَمَنْ كَانَ أَخُوهُ تَحْتَ يَدِهِ
 فَلْيُطْعِمَهُ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ، وَلْيَلْبِسْهُ مِمَّا يَلْبَسُ، وَلَا يَكْلِفْهُ مِنَ الْعَمَلِ مَا يَغْلِبُهُ، فَإِنْ كَلَفْتُمُوهُمْ
 فَأَعَيْنُوهُمْ وَلَا تَعَذِّبُوا خَلْقَ اللَّهِ.

“They are your brothers, Allah has put (them) into your possession, and if it were His Will, he would have put you into their possession. Therefore, if one's brother happens to be in one's hand, he should let him eat what he eats and clothe him what he clothes himself and should not force him to do such work as overwhelms himself. And if you entrust him with responsibilities, help him and do not punish Allah's created beings.”

Many hadiths and sayings of companions have been recorded on this matter.

It is prohibited for a slave to run away

Among the things which are forbidden for a slave is running away from his master. Severe penalties have been recorded in this connection.

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,
 إِذَا أَبَقَ الْعَبْدُ لَمْ تَقْبَلْ لَهُ صَلَاةٌ.

“When a slave flees, his prayer is not accepted.”

According to another narration, فَقَدْ كَفَرَ حَتَّى يَرْجِعَ إِلَيْهِ.

“He has committed an acts of unbelief until he returns (to his master).”

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,
 أَيُّمَا عَبْدٍ مَاتَ فِي إِبَاقَةٍ دَخَلَ النَّارَ وَإِنْ كَانَ قُتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ.

“Whosoever who dies as a slave in flight (escaping) goes to Hell even if it is that he was killed in the path of Allah.”

He may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him said,
 أَيُّمَا عَبْدٍ أَبَقَ مِنْ مَوَالِيهِ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ حَتَّى يَرْجِعَ إِلَيْهِمْ.

“Whosoever flees his masters commit unbelief until he returns to them.”

Sheikh Allamah Ahmad ibn Hajar al-Haitami may Allah be pleased with him, said in his *book Az-Zawajir Aniqtihamil Kaba`ir*, “Imam Ahmad bin Hambal may Allah mercy be upon him recorded a hadith from Aisha may Allah be pleased with her, “A man sat before the Messenger of Allah may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him and said, “Indeed, I have two slaves. They lie to me, betray me and disobey me and I, in turn, abuse them and beat them. Now, where do I stand with them?” The Messenger of Allah may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him answer,

إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَحْسَبُ مَا خَانُوكَ وَعَصَوْكَ وَكَذَّبُوكَ، فَإِنْ كَانَ عِقَابُكَ أَيَّاهُمْ بِقَدَرِ دُنُوبُهُمْ كَانَ كِفَافًا لَا لَكَ وَلَا عَلَيْكَ. وَإِنْ كَانَ عِقَابُكَ أَيَّاهُمْ فَوْقَ دُنُوبِهِمْ إِقْتَصَرَ لَهُمْ مِنْكَ الْفَضْلُ.

“On the Day of Judgment, their betrayals, disobedience and lies to you will be counted. However, if your punishment to them is equal to their misdeeds, then things are level, nothing for you and nothing against you. But if your punishment on them exceeds their misdeeds, they will be compensated for the difference from you.”

The man stepped aside and began to shout and cry. Then the Prophet may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said to him: “Do you not read the Word of the Exalted?”

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ حَرْدَلٍ آتَيْنَا بِهَا وَكَفَى بِنَا حَاسِبِينَ.

“We shall set up scales of justice for the Day of Judgment so that not a soul will be dealt with unjustly in the least. And if there be (no more than) the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it (to account): and enough are We to take account¹.”

The man said, “O Rasulullah I do not see any good for myself and them except in getting separation from them. I call you to witness that they are free.”

¹ Surah 21 Al-Anbiya Verse 47.

Rights of Teachers

You must be aware that among those who you should be obedience and respect to are the teachers of the Quran, instructors of religious sciences, also the *Sheikhs* and the *Ustazahs* who nurture the path-seekers and guide aspirants. They are the exemplars to whom close adherence to their instructions is emphasized. It therefore imperative that those who seek religious sciences from them and those under their auspices and care to hold them in high esteem and appreciation and show them due respect and manners. They must also abide completely to their instructions and comply with such directions as they give in the areas of religious sciences and ways.

One of them has said, “The obligation due to the Muslim for the spiritual guide teacher is more emphatic than the responsibility to parents. Because whereas the parents protect the child from blight which may threaten his body and his worldly affairs, and works to get for him what gives him enjoyment and pleasure in his day-to-day living.

While the religious teacher and spiritual guide protects him (his soul), through instruction and guidance, from what harms him in the Hereafter and functions as a cause and a path leading him to Paradise and its eternal delight and the bounty of meeting Allah, Glorious and Exalted is He which is the height of all bliss and the most sublime of them all.

There has grown a tradition among the righteous, both the ancestors and the successors to revere the religious teachers and the *Ustaz*, to be conscious of the obligation due to them and the need to be on perfect manners with them, so much so that ar-Rabik bin Sulaiman¹ said, “Out of respect for him I did not dare drink water while ash-Shafii (Imam Muhammad bin Idris ash-Shafii) looked at me.”

Amirul Mu'uminin Ali, may Allah ennoble his face, said, “The obligation due to an primordial learned from you is to pronounce the

¹ His name is Ar-Rabik bin Sulaiman bin Abdul Jabbar Al-Muradi, Abu Muhammad Al-Mashri, a companion of Imam Syafi'I and narrator of Imam Shafi'I's books. He passed away in 270H.

greetings to the people in general and to greet to him alone, a deliberate greeting, not to sit in front of him, not to point towards him with your hands, not to wink with your eyes, to say that so-and-so has expressed a view contrary to yours, not backbite anybody in his presence, not to discourse secretly while in his session, not pull on his clothing whenever he got up, not press on him (for his attention) when his energy is at a low ebb and not to tire or bore with his long friendship.”

Imam an-Namawi, may Allah have mercy on him has given an excellent write-up on the manners of the student and the religious teacher at the end of the Fourth Chapter of his book *at-Tibyaan*.

So has Imam al-Ghazali, may Allah have mercy on him in his book “*Bidayatul-Hidaya*” the Beginning of Guidance in the chapter dealing with the manners of the students with the religious teacher.

Greatest Rights of All is that of Rasulullah

May Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him

Know that the Messenger of Allah may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, the noblest, the greatest and the most binding to all Muslims, is by unanimous agreement - the Greatest Exemplar. The manners and obligation due to him are the greatest after that of Allah Glorious and Exalted is He and so binding is obedience to him. For whosoever loves, obeys him and immensely esteems him, then he has indeed loved and obeyed Allah the Exalted. For Allah, the Exalted says.

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ.

“Say: ‘If ye do love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your sins; for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful¹.’ ”

The Exalted says,

“He who obeys the Prophet obeys Allah²”. مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ.

The Exalted says,

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ.

¹ Surah 3 al-Imran Verse 31.

² Surah 4 an-Nisaa Verse 80.

“So take what the Messenger assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you. And fear Allah; Indeed, Allah is strict in Punishment¹.”

The Exalted says,

فَلْيَحْذَرِ الَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِ أَنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ.

“Then let those beware who withstand the Messenger’s order, lest some trial befalls them, or a grievous Penalty be inflicted on them².”

The Exalted says,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ، يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ.

“Verily those who plight their fealty to thee do no less than plight their fealty to Allah: the Hand of Allah is over their hands³.”

The Exalted says,

فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ مَعَهُ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ.

“So it is those who believe in him, honour him, help him, and follow the Light which is sent down with him, it is they who will prosper⁴.”

The Exalted says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَنْ تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ.

“O you who believe! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak aloud to him, as you may speak aloud to one another, lest your deeds become vain and you perceive not,” and the verses that follow describe in more detail this situation⁵.

Then he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونَ هَؤُلَاءِ تَبَعًا لِمَا جِئْتُ بِهِ.

¹ Surah 59 Hashr Verse 8.

² Surah 24 an-Nur Verse 63.

³ Surah 48 al-Fath Verse 10.

⁴ Surah 7 Al-Araf Verse 157.

⁵ Surah 49 al-Hujurat Verse 2.

“One of you does not believe until his desire follows what I have come with.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him also said,

لَوْ كَانَ مُوسَى وَعِيسَى حَيَّيْنِ لَمْ يَسْعَهُمَا إِلَّا اتِّبَاعِي .

“If Musa and Isa were alive, they will not hesitate to follow me.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَنْ أَطَاعَنِي فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَقَدْ عَصَى اللَّهَ .

“Whosoever obeys me has indeed obeyed Allah, and whosoever disobeys me has indeed disobeyed Allah.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him also said, “All of you will enter Paradise except those who refuse (to enter it).” Then they (the companions) asked, “Who refuses?” Then he may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him answered, “Whosoever obeys me enters Paradise, and whosoever disobeys me has indeed refused (to enter).”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

مَنْ آذَانِي فَقَدْ آذَى اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ آذَى اللَّهَ أَذَحْلُهُ النَّارَ .

“Who annoys me, annoys Allah and whosoever annoys Allah, He puts them in Hell.”

To makes this love perfect is to extend it to include the people of his, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, house and his companions, and show esteem and respect for them.

So says Allah the Exalted، قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَى .

“Say (O Muhammad) No reward do I ask of you except the love of those near of kin¹.”

Then the Exalted says.

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ .

¹ Surah 42 Ash-Shura Verse 23.

“The vanguard (of Islam), the first of those who forsook (their homes) and of those who gave them aid, and (also) those who follow them in (all) good deeds, well-pleased is Allah with them, as are they with Him¹.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him also said,

أَحِبُّوا اللَّهَ لِمَا يَعْزُودُكُمْ بِهِ مِنْ نِعَمِهِ، وَأَحِبُّوايَ لِحُبِّ اللَّهِ، وَأَحِبُّوا أَهْلَ بَيْتِي حُبِّي.

“Love Allah for such as His bounties as He nourishes you with, and love me because you love Allah and love the people of my house because you love me.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said to Abbas may Allah mercy be upon him,

لَا يَدْخُلُ قَلْبٌ أَحَدُ الْإِيمَانِ حَتَّى يُحِبُّكُمْ اللَّهُ وَلِقْرَابَتَكُمْ مِنِّي.

“Iman does not enter the heart of none until they love you for the sake of Allah and your nearness to me.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him also said to Fatima, Ali, al-Hasan and al-Husain, may Allah be pleased with them:

أَنَا حَرْبٌ لِمَنْ حَارَبْتُمْ، وَسَلَامٌ لِمَنْ سَاكَمْتُمْ.

“I am at war with those you are at war with, and at peace with those you are at peace with.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said in the Hadith narrated by Zaid bin Arqam, may Allah mercy be upon him,

وَعَنْتِي أَهْلُ بَيْتِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ اللَّهُ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي.

“Remember my (descendants) household I remind you in the Name of Allah of my household.”

Abu Bakar may Allah’s mercy be upon him said,

ارْقَبُوا مُحَمَّدًا فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ.

“Have conscientious regard to Muhammad in the people of his house.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him also said,

¹ Surah at-Taubah Verse 100.

إِحْفَظُونِي فِي أَصْحَابِي، لَا تُتَّخَذُواهُمْ غَرَضًا مِنْ بَعْدِي، مَنْ أَحَبَّهُمْ فَبِحَبِّي أَحَبَّهُمْ، وَمَنْ أَبْغَضَهُمْ فَبِبْغْضِي أَبْغَضَهُمْ، وَمَنْ آذَاهُمْ فَقَدْ آذَانِي، وَمَنْ آذَانِي فَقَدْ آذَى اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ آذَى اللَّهَ فَيُوشِكُ أَنْ يَأْخُذَهُ.

“Uphold me in my companions; do not take them as targets after me; whosoever loves them loves them because of my love, and whosoever is disaffected against them is disaffected against them because of disaffected against me, and whosoever molests them has indeed molested me, and whosoever molest me has indeed invoked the wrath of Allah risks penalty from Him.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him also said,
لَا تَسُبُّوا أَصْحَابِي، فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَوْ أَنْفَقَ أَحَدُكُمْ مِثْلَ أَحَدٍ ذَهَبًا مَا بَلَغَ مُدَّ أَحَدِهِمْ وَلَا نَصِيفَهُ.

“Do not abuse my Companions. Verily, in the Name of Him in Whose Hands my soul is, were one of you to spend the like of the mountain of Uhud in gold he would not attain the rank of one of them not even half of it.”

A Muslim who is concerned about his religion should, therefore, beware of hating a member of the house of the Prophet may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, or anyone of his Companions because that harms his religion and his hereafter.

On that account, he gets deemed among those who offend his Prophet and annoy him may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him. Instead, he should love them and praise them in the same way as Allah and His Prophet have appreciated them.

Stop the tongue from going in between the companions

It is imperative, and one must be firmly established whereby we restrain the tongue from dipping into what transpired between the Rasulullah’s may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, companions after him, the incidence between them in the wars and the trials which ensued.

The more significant of these frightening and puzzling events were:

- The murder of Amirul Mu'uminin Uthman bin Affan, may Allah be pleased with him.
- The dispute between Amirul Mu'uminin Ali bin Abu Thalib may Allah honour him, and Talhah that involved az-Zubair and Aisha may Allah be pleased with her, the Mother of Believers, on the day of the Battle of the Camel¹.
- The dispute between Amirul Mu'umin Ali bin Thalib may Allah ennoble him and Mu'awiyah bin Abu Sufyan and Amru bin al-Ash at the Saffin Battle².

In matters like these, a Muslim who is ardently anxious about his religion should find the best excuse regarding these unfortunate events of the Companions of Rasulullah may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him to uphold their honour because they are all just, honest and trustworthy men.

Believers who ardently follows the footsteps of the companions by living up to the description given by Allah the Exalted as in,

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ.

“Those who came after them say, “Our Lord! Forgive us, and our brethren who came before us into the Faith, and leave not, in our hearts, rancour (or sense of injury) against those who have believed. Our Lord! Thou art indeed Full of Kindness, Most Merciful³.”

A narration recorded from him, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, in which he said,

¹ The first incident is referred to as the clash of the Camels that occurred on Jumadil Akhir 36H.

² The second incident, Shiffin is a small area near the coast of Furat near Riqqah. It began on beginning of Safar in 37H.

³ Surah 59 al-Hasyr Verse 10.

إِذَا ذُكِرَ أَصْحَابِي فَأَمْسِكُوا.

“When my companions are mentioned, hold (your tongues).”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

أَصْحَابِي كَالنُّجُومِ، بِأَيِّهِمْ أَقْتَدَيْتُمْ إِهْتَدَيْتُمْ.

“My companions are like stars whomever you follow you will attain righteousness.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him also said,

خَيْرُ الْقُرُونِ قَرْنِي، ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُونَهُمْ، ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُونَهُمْ، ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُونَهُمْ.

“The best of centuries is my century, then those that follow, then those which follow, then those who follow.”

He may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him said,

إِحْفَظُوا فِي أَصْحَابِي وَأَصْهَارِي، فَمَنْ حَفِظَنِي فِيهِمْ حَفِظَهُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ. وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْفَظْنِي فِيهِمْ تَخَلَّى اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، وَمَنْ تَخَلَّى اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَوْشَكَ أَنْ يَأْخُذَهُ.

“I care and upholds my Companions, and relations for whosoever cares and upholds me in their status, Allah will protect him in this world and the Next, and whosoever who does not care and uphold me in them, Allah will abandon him and whomsoever Allah abandons runs the risk of Him punishing him.”

وَبِاللَّهِ الْإِعَانَةُ وَالتَّوْفِيقُ

Verily, in Allah is assistance

And the enabling grace that leads to success.



Chapter Seven

The Seventh Category

دَعْوَةُ الْمَشْغُولِينَ بِطَاعَةِ اللَّهِ

وَدَعْوَةُ الْمَلَابِسِينَ لِمَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ

A Call to those Devoted in Obedience to Allah Yet Clad the Acts with Offences Against Allah

This category comprises of ordinary Muslims who are dedicated to the obedience of Allah, Glorified and Exalted is He, and devoted to it; and in the process unknowingly commit wrongdoings to Allah and fall into sins. This is also a general reminder to the common Muslims who are pre-occupied with the obedience to Allah.

Know that the second category mentioned earlier dealt with the elect among the servants of Allah. It also contained some directions and reminders appropriate to their state, namely the elect that include Allah's saints and those dedicated to Him. May Allah cause us to benefit from them and bestow blessings upon us and through them upon all Muslims and may He not deprive us of their blessings and the blessings of their answered supplications.

You must take note that the ordinary people who are devoted to Allah's obedience, always at it, such a Muslim must learn the basic knowledge without which his obedience is incomplete and invalid. This

knowledge has to do with overt and apparent matters, like the laws of Purity [*Thara*], Prayers [*Salat*], Fasting [*Siyam*] and other practices.

It is also binding upon him to have a complete knowledge of the sciences of Faith and the Creed that will enable him to protect his belief, such as knowledge about Allah and His Attributes, His Angels, His Books, His Prophets, the Knowledge of the Last Day, Resurrection and the Gathering, the Balance and the Bridge [*as-Sirat*], and Paradise and Hell. He should acquire such knowledge of Faith and knowledge about Islam which will make faith [*Iman*] as well as his Islam sound, perfect and complete. That is a preface to devoting oneself to worship, and divine service is like the edifice.

Indeed, knowledge is the foundation, and divine worship is the building. A building without a strong foundation will not last long, that is, constant and durable. Perhaps, a devotee is busy worshipping in obedience and devotions all the time until he tired himself in the process, and yet in all that he is not commended nor rewarded. Instead, he may well be guilty of error and sinning if he acted without the base knowledge of the basics of Islam and Faith, necessary for establishing sound and complete devotions. Let it be that a devotee gives this matter his utmost attention and spend his time pursuing it. Indeed, it has been said, “Whosoever worships Allah without knowledge has more harm recoiling on him as a result of his action than any benefit out of it,” and that is correct.

In some cases, devotees who do not have any knowledge may well enter into some of the devotions in a manner not approved by the Law and thereby commit sins. So had they given up that worship they would not have sins no matter how strongly recommended the supererogatory. Knowledge is essential and a prelude to worship and the wholehearted devotion to it.

Worshippers must take only the Lawful

The Allah devotees should choose what is lawful in what he eats and do, what he wears and all the things he needs in his life, because the worship

of those who eat unlawful food, is not accepted. He, the Sublimed and Exalted, says,

إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ.

“Allah do accept of the sacrifice of those who are righteous¹.”

A learned said, “Worshipping while eating what is unlawful is like build a house over dung.” He, may Allah blessings and peace be upon him, also said, “Every flesh that grows from what is unlawful then (Hell) fire is more suitable for it.” He should, therefore, be on his utmost guard and vigilance and alertness in what he eats and wears and in all his needs against what is unlawful and dubious. Otherwise, his worship will be blighted and spoil such that it will not please nor accepted by Allah.

A devotee also needs to inject virtue into his intent and to examine such purpose from the very beginning of his affair and his devotion, so that his intention is confined to seeking an abridged to face Allah, the Exalted, and the Next Abode, and aimed at seeking to draw closer to Allah, and serve Him rather than any other goal among worldly goals or such human desires as gaining prestige or wealth or position of love in people’s hearts or respect or praise from them.

He should be particularly watchful against seeking to play to the gallery with his knowledge or showing off with his deeds thus being aborted, his effort becoming futile and his reward and recompense nullified. Perhaps, it may well be the case that in addition to that, he will get punished by Allah with a painful punishment. For indeed, showing off, and ostentation is one of the pernicious cardinal sins. He, may Allah blessed and grant him peace, has indeed called it the hidden or minor form of associating anything in worshipping Allah or polytheism [*shirk*]. It was narrated that regarding those who recite of Allah’s Books, and the martyr who dies in His Path and the man who spends his wealth, that if by doing so they seek praise from people and publicity, then Allah, the Exalted, expose their lies and is displeased with them, and orders that they be moved to Hell, as reported in a hadith.

¹ Surah 5 Al-Maidah Verse 27.

When the above hadith was presented to one of the predecessors, may Allah show them Mercy, he cried intensely and said: “Allah, the Exalted, speaks the truth when He says

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوَفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُبْخَسُونَ.
أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا النَّارُ وَحَبِطَ مَا صَنَعُوا فِيهَا وَبَاطِلٌ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ.

“Those who desire the life of the Present and its glitter, to them We shall pay (the price of) their deeds therein, without diminution. They are those for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter but the Fire: vain are the designs they frame therein, and of no effect are the deeds that they do!¹”

Showing off which takes the forms of whims which occur in a human heart regarding other humans, impulses which come not out of one’s choice and upon which one is not comfortable with, a showing off like that is not the prohibited showing off. However, if such whims are the cause which motivates the divine worship, then that has nullified it from its very roots: if they are mixed with religious inspiration, then there will be some isolation. al-Imam Ghazali, may Allah, the Exalted, show him mercy, and other Imams have expounded on that. All such showing off are prohibited and containing as it does an immense danger and much blame. There are the verses of the Quran and sound narrations regarding this matter such as the saying of he, may Allah bless and grant him peace, in which he was quoting His Lord, the Glorified and Exalted as a *Hadith Qudsi*.

أَنَا أَغْنَى الْأَعْنِيَاءِ عَنِ الشِّرْكِ، فَمَنْ عَمِلَ لِي عَمَلًا أَشْرَكَ فِيهِ غَيْرِي فَنَصِيبِي لِشَرِيكِي وَأَنَا مِنْهُ بَرِيءٌ.

“I am the most self-sufficient to the shirk; whosoever does a deed in which he joins Me with other than Me, verily my portion goes to him whom he has made a partner, and I have nothing to do with their deeds.

Another narration was quoted as saying, “That it will be said to the one who is insincere and two-faced when they go seeking the reward of their deed on the Day of Judgment: go forth to those to whom you

¹ Surah 11 Hud Verses 15-16.

showed off in the World and see whether can you find any reward of your deeds with them?” Another hadith has been recorded saying that “at the least, showing off is polytheism [*shirk*] and that four names will call the ostentatious on the Day of Judgment: “O Insincere Show-off! O Cheat! O Loser! O Unchaste! Go get your reward from the person, whom for his sake you did it, you have no reward with Us.”

Let a Muslim who hold Allah in awe and adoration, and who is ardently anxious about his religion and his Next Abode be on maximum guard against ostentation in all its varieties and all its forms. He should guard himself against that with the most effective fortification. Indeed, should any of its craving feeling or fleeting ideas occur to him, he should make an effort to reject them within himself as much as possible, and he should hate them, he should seek forgiveness from Allah and seek refuge with Allah from their evil.

Avoid Arrogance and Self-Conceit

He should also be on guard against vain, glorifying himself to people on accounts of his acts of worship and service to Allah. Then he should also guard against glorifying himself over them because of his act of obedience. Such an attitude is among attitudes which displease Allah and nullify the awards of the virtuous deeds. A hadith narration quoted,

لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ مَنْ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ مِنْ كِبَرٍ .

“One will not enter Paradise who has but a speck of arrogance in his heart.”

The author of al-Hikam said, “It may well be that disobedience which instils a sense of humility and Allah-oriented meekness is better than obedience to Allah which invests a person with glory and arrogance.”

Indeed, it is the nature of the one who is obedient and kind to be more fearful of Allah and more humble in the presence of His Majesty and more disposed to lower his wing in his relationship with believing servants of Allah. These qualities are among the best acts of obedience.

Equally, he should be on guard against self-glory and self-regard on account of his acts of obedience. Indeed, that is also among the tendencies which abort acts of virtue. On the other hand, he should be enlightened that due to Allah's good grace is upon him that permits his acts of obedience to Him and is well pleased with his service although he is but a lowly, humble, needy servant. Notwithstanding, Allah, the Exalted, has honoured him and elevated him by making him among those who worship and serve Him, those who invoke His name and laud Him in his Most Beauteous Names for favours rendered. Indeed the favours and the bounty belongs to Allah, Exalted is He, it is His at the beginning and the end, inwardly and outwardly, here-and-now and here-after.

Man is Incapable to Repay Allah's Favor

Let the servant also be aware of Allah's rights upon His adoring servants, includes an encompassing obedience to Him, and the incumbency of service and worship to Him in all domains, and that not one of the servants can discharge even a part of that binding duty, also if he was to scale to the pinnacle of adoration and devotion, also if he was to strive, strain, grid and spur himself to the very limit of his abilities and resources. Thus he should acknowledge that he still falls short of the obligation resting upon him to deliver the worships, adoration and service properly due to his Lord, and the servant will have to acknowledge the Bounty Allah has bestowed upon him by enabling him to do what he does in terms of obedience to Him and service to Him. He should not look upon himself with glory nor amaze upon his deeds. For if he did that he would suffer ruin where he hopes for success or deliverance and endures loss where the gain is his expectation. The Exalted Speaker does say,

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ مَا زَكَا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ أَبَدًا وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُزَكِّي مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ.

“Were it not for the grace and mercy of Allah on you, not one of you would ever have been pure: but Allah does purify whom he pleases, and Allah is One Who knows and hears (all things)¹”.

¹ Surah 24 anNur Verse 21.

He, may Allah's blessing and peace be upon him, said, "None will enter Paradise by his deeds. Someone asked, 'Not even you, O Prophet of Allah?' Not even me except that Allah has enveloped me with His Mercy."

Despite what he, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, had in the way of indescribable effort, exertion and strives in worshipping Allah. So much so that he stood up at night until his two feet swelled even though his position and status before Allah has no peer among the noble servants of Allah as well as his chosen servants who have drawn nigh to the (Sublime Assembly), may the blessings of Allah and His graces of peace enfold him and all of them. Then there is a narration regarding the devoted servant who worshipped Allah for five hundred years on an island. He will be made to stand before Allah, and Allah, the Transcendent and Exalted, will tell him: "O my servant enter paradise by virtue of my Mercy, and (as if not satisfy) he will say: Nay indeed, with my deed 'O Lord! Then Allah will command that to account for his life. So when the order that the bounties of the eye be counted that alone will outstrip all his devotions for five hundred years and leave many outstanding bounties of Allah upon him unaccounted; and Allah, the Transcendent, will command that he be taken to Hell-fire. Then he will say: "O Lord makes me enter Paradise by virtue of your mercy; and Allah, the Transcendent, will accordingly command him to be taken to Paradise by His Mercy." the *Hadith* is lengthy.

Thus, a servant dedicated to worship should know that Allah's bounty enfolds him at the beginning and the end, inside and outside and in all circumstances and all stations. However, let him be aware that whenever the conditions change, he must praise Allah and express gratitude to Him, and to acknowledge the bounty and grace; plus he should recognise the fact that he falls short in his strivings to discharge the obligations due to *al-Haqq* - the True One. Also, he falls short in worship and divine service, even though he may have strived to the summit, and stretch as he may to the limit of his resources. It has come to our knowledge that "Allah has Angels whom since Allah, the Exalted, created them, are engaged in his divine service. Some are standing

upright but do not bow, some bowing but do not prostrate, some prostrating but do not rise until the Day of Judgment. When the day arrives, they will raise their heads to their Lord and they would say: “Transcendent be You, We have worshipped You as is Your due to be worshipped” That is what was reported in paraphrase or close to it.

Be Submissive, Succumb and Abase in Worship

Those preoccupied with the divine worship of Allah, the Exalted, must be thrilled in awe to Allah and to be humble, alert and present with their hearts lest they become distracted from Allah. They should not outwardly be busy with the worship of the Exalted while hearts are occupied with heart’s conversations concerning the affairs of the world, issues of living and what people say. He will thus show bad manners while engaged in the service of his Lord since he worships Him outwardly rather than inwardly, that is, with his body rather than his heart. And a *Hadith* recorded and narrated as,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ صُورَكُمْ وَأَعْمَالَكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يَنْظُرُ إِلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ

“Verily Allah does not look at your physical self nor deeds; however; He looks at your hearts.”

Be at Peace While Worshipping

He should be equally caution lest he engages in a deed hastiness with little deliberation, so much so that he is unable to perform the worship its due conform whether it is to do with what is obligatory or it is encouraged supererogatory. Like as examples a person who does not recite the Quran correctly nor contemplate upon it nor observes calmly with serenity in his bowing [*ruku’u*], his intermediate standing position [*i’tidal*], his sitting [*julus*] and his prostration [*sujud*]. Thus that way he gains no rewards nor benefits either in his prayers or in his recitation and it may well be the case that his entire worship becomes thereby nullified from the root act. That is if he drops what is compulsory and thus performs what an unsound worship is and he emerges with a burden of sin rather than with thanks and reward.

Worship in Moderation in Order not to Get Bore

It is also definitely binding upon him to be moderate in his worship and to confine himself to such deeds as he can continuously fulfil without being bored and without lapse of attention. Indeed, he upon whom be blessings and peace said, **تَكَلَّفُوا مِنَ الْأَعْمَالِ تُطِيقُونَ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَمَلُّ حَتَّى تَمَلُّوْا.** “Undertake such deeds you can persevere, for indeed Allah will not cease rewarding you until you grow weary.”

Also, he upon whom be Allah’s blessings, and peace said, “Moderation and again moderation and in that manner you will arrive” (meaning arrive at the final destination to face Allah). He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace also said, “The best of deeds before Allah is the most constant even if it be a little.” Thus makes it clear that the little deeds constantly perform by a worshipper is better than attempting many inconsistent acts.

Now part of the traits of Satan, may Allah banish him from His Mercy, to incite man initially to do a lot of worship to the point of excess, but at the end, he retreats either towards giving it up altogether or into boredom or into doing it with haste so that he is unable to do it as required, namely, with a thrilling sense of awe and humble submissiveness before Allah. Consequently, his state becomes like that of he who does not do any deed at all or worst still. Many acts which are not performing well by a worshipper would be better off had he does not do it, and this is well-known and observable in the state of he who does it beneficently.

Indeed, Allah, the Exalted says, **إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا.** “Verily, We shall not forfeit the reward of anyone who improves upon a righteous deed¹.”

The Exalted says, **وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ.** “We shall bestow upon them such rewards for the best of their actions².”

¹ Surah 18 al-Kahf Verse 30.

² Surah 16 an-Nahl Verse 97.

Look and ponder how the Exalted emphasised excellence [*ihsan*] and makes it a condition in deeds. You should realise that excellence or beneficence in deeds is more important than the act itself. There is a *Hadith* narration that quoted, “Verily, Allah has prescribed excellence in every action!” Therefore ensure that when you do an act of obedience, you deliberate, focus and proceed with excellence, give each part of the act its full share of thrilling awe with a mind that is present in front of Allah, then you will count among those who perform good deeds [*al-muhsinin*], and Allah, the Transcendent and Exalted says,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ.

“Indeed, Allah is with those who restrain themselves and those who are the doers of good¹.”

It is Obligatory to be Mindful of the Times of Worship

It is incumbent to ensure that neither time nor hour nor breath passes by except you capture it to preoccupy yourself in it works of virtue like prayers, recitation of the Qur'an, or invocation of the Name of Allah or studying useful religious knowledge, or reflection about spiritual matters or the Hereafter, or pre-occupation with day to day chaos that is indispensable to assist your life in the Here-and-Now as a means to your Hereafter: do this without resorting to reduce, redefining nor mounting up excuses on your religious routine, somewhat the aid from such routine of living is clear and visible. Allah will manage and govern your guidance and assistance, lead you wholly to what He loves and is well-pleasing to Him, and draws one close and hold on to his hand for verily, He is the Protector and Allah is our Sufficiency, and supremely to be trusted is He.

A Word of Reminding and Cautioning to Ordinary Muslims Who are Given to Sinning

Know that sins and acts of disobedience are but defilements, foul and unclean things. Indeed, Allah has shielded them from his Prophets and Messengers, and He also fortified his saints and chosen ones from them. On the other hand, Allah uses sins as the trials upon the enemies, and the

¹ Surah 16 Verse 128.

unblessed amongst His creations, those condemn and those far away from whom the Word of the Lord has been verified, and as well as those alienated from Providence.

Now there are among them those who were overtaken by Divine Mercy, and as a result, they were able to repent by virtue of Divine Grace and thus join those devoted to Allah and obedient to Him. It is well known that “He who repents is like he is without sin”, which means, “One who repents, Allah accepts his repentance. Verily, Allah accepts the repentance of His servant so long as the soul has not reached the throat for death.” Included in this group are those who persist and indulge in disobedience until they leave this world and arrive in the Next World. They will meet their Lord while they are filthy tarnish with immorality in violation of Allah Rules. Their fate is extremely grave. Their predicament severe and their position most dangerously exposed, and this is especially so if they happen to have died while persisting in the cardinal sins. Sins, that is, like abandoning the prescribed prayers, withholding the binding *Zakat*, while committing sins, like fornication/adultery, drinking, acting unjustly against people, spending their wealth for vanities, being unkind and wicked to one’s parents, taking the property of orphans as well as similar ruinous acts of disobedience.

Serious Repercussion in committing Sin

On the whole, all evils and afflictions which bring in their wake penalties and ruin, now or in the future, in this world or the next, inwardly or outwardly, all such evils and afflictions originate in fact from sins and acts of disobedience, taking liberties at disobedience against Allah, the Sovereign and Irresistible, thus going forth into what displeases Him either in the form of defying His commandments or doing what He forbids.

Allah, the Exalted, says

فَكُلًّا أَخَذْنَا بِذَنْبِهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ حَاصِبًا وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ أَخَذَتْهُ الصَّيْحَةُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ
خَسَفْنَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ أَغْرَقْنَا وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ.

“Each one of them We seized for his crime: of them, against some We sent a violent tornado (with showers of stone); some were caught by a (mighty) Blast; some We caused the earth to swallow up; and some We drowned in waters: it was not Allah Who injured or oppressed them: they injured and oppressed their souls¹”

Allah, the Exalted, says,

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ.

“Whatever misfortune happens to you is because of the things your hands have wrought, and for many (of them) He grants forgiveness²”.

The Exalted also says,

أَفَأَمِنَ الَّذِينَ مَكَرُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ أَنْ يَخْسِفَ اللَّهُ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضَ أَوْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ. أَوْ يَأْخُذَهُمْ فِي تَقْلُبِهِمْ فَمَا هُمْ بِمُعْجِزِينَ. أَوْ يَأْخُذَهُمْ عَلَى تَخَوُّفٍ فَإِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ.

“Do then those who devise evil plots feel secure that Allah will not cause the earth to swallow them up, or that the Wrath will not seize them from directions they little perceive. Or that He may not call them to account amid their goings and fro without a chance of their frustrating Him? Or that He may not call them by process of slow wastage - for you Lord is indeed full of kindness and mercy³”.

Under these circumstances, it becomes binding upon a believer who fears his Lord, is ardently anxious about himself, and firmly believes that he will return to Allah and will indeed meet him. It becomes binding upon such a believer to avoid sins and acts of disobedience absolutely, and guard himself against them with a most effective shield and distance himself from them the maximum distance. Indeed, he should avoid them in the same manner as he would deadly poisons, devastating waters and gutting fires. For the penalty of embracing sins and acts of disobedience is incomparably more severe in many ways as is well-known to anyone

¹ Surah 29 Ankabut Verse 40.

² Surah 42 Verse 30.

³ Surah 16 an-Nahl Verses 45-47.

with an insight into the nature of the Divine Covenant, like those who know the path of the worshippers who believe and mindful of their duties to Allah.

الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ وَهُمْ مِنَ السَّاعَةِ مُشْفِقُونَ.

“Those who fear their Lord in their most secret thoughts, and who hold the Hour (of Judgment) in awe¹”.

الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَقُّو رَبِّهِمْ وَاتَّخَذُوا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ.

Who bear in mind the certainty that they are to meet their Lord, and that they are to return to Him.²”

Do not Fault Pre-Determination When You Commit Sins

He should take utmost care that whenever he slips into a bit of sinning and disobedience, not to justify on the grounds of it being predetermined by Allah. He should not seek to justify by saying that they have been written upon him that he will do it and that he has no means of escape from it. Because these are among invalid arguments; they are of no avail to him who presents them. They do not benefit him. On the contrary, they harm him and distance him even more from Allah and expose him to the Wrath and Displeasure of Allah.

On the whole, belief in the Divine pre-determination of the good and bad is a central part of the Creed. But arguing against Allah on the grounds of Divine pre-determination is not allowed. That counts among grave matters. For as long as man has his freedom with himself, he has neither excuse leeway to abandon the commandments of Allah and embark on what He forbids. It is no use for him to claim that: “This is pre-determinate and this has been pre-written upon me!” Wherefrom does he gets this knowledge?

Also, this question of Divine predetermination is a complicated matter. It has depths which the elect of Allah cannot fathom, not to speak of the ordinary folks.

¹ Surah 21 al-Anbiyaa Verse 49.

² Surah 2 al-Baqara Verse 46.

It's Dangerous for the Sinner to Hope for Forgiveness

Likewise, fond hope for forgiveness is also one of the most dangerous things for those who fall into acts of disobedience to Allah, the Exalted, and who abandon His commands. They say, “Verily Allah is All-Generous and Compassionate. He forgives the sins of the sinners and does not bother.” The statement is valid and true! However, surely a servant must comply with the Commandment of His All-Generous, Compassionate Lord and avoid what He forbids, then there is also a duty upon him to do his utmost in this area. Indeed he must mobilise all his resources towards this purpose. Having accomplished that, then he should hope for the forgiveness of his Lord and look forward to His Mercy. He should entertain neither fond hopes nor cherish the mere illusion, without striving, without effort. For if he did otherwise, he would be among those about whom the Exalted, the Blessed (Lord) says, فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ وَرِثُوا الْكِتَابَ يَأْخُذُونَ عَرَضَ هَذَا الْأَدْنَىٰ وَيَقُولُونَ سَيُغْفَرُ لَنَا.

“After they succeeded an (evil) generation, they inherited the Book, but they chose (for themselves) the vanities of this world, saying (for excuses): everything will be forgiven us¹.”

And He, the Exalted says,

فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهَوَاتِ فَسُوفَ يَلْقَوْنَ غِيًّا.

“But after them there followed a posterity who missed prayers and followed after lusts: soon, then will they face Destruction².”

The Prophet, upon whom be blessings and peace:

الْكَيْسُ مَنْ دَانَ نَفْسَهُ وَعَمِلَ لِمَا بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ، وَالْعَاجِزُ مَنْ أَتْبَعَ نَفْسَهُ هَوَاهَا وَتَمَتَّى عَلَى اللَّهِ الْأَمَانِي.

“The prudent is he who calls himself to account and do works for the Hereafter. While the incapable weakling is he who lets his self bow to its passion and then nurse fond empty hopes of Allah.”

¹ Surah 7 Al-A'raaf Verse 169.

² Surah 19 Mariam Verse 59.

Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “Call yourselves to account before you are called to account, and take the measure of your deeds before they are measured and prepare for the Supreme Examination before Allah, the Exalted.”

Abu Ubaidah Amir bin Al-Jarrah, may Allah be pleased with him, said: “How many people dressed in clean white cloths but dirty their religion? How many people seemed respectable but dishonoured themselves. Cover up your earlier faults and wrongdoings with new good deeds. Even if one of you had committed an extremely atrocious act, then he undertakes a good deed, such deed will scale above all his bad deeds until all of the bad deeds is subdued.”

Al-Hassan Al-Bishri, may Allah have mercy upon him, said: “Indeed, the hope of seeking forgiveness has misled many people such that they left this earth, that is dying, a bankrupt”, he continued, “of any good deeds.” He also said, “Be aware of those empty hopes; it is like a dumb chasing a canyon.”

Seeking for Forgiveness Without Doing Good Deeds is Contradictory

You should know that Allah, the Exalted, has not mentioned mercy and forgiveness as Attributes of Himself except that He would attach conditions and qualifications, as in,

وَإِنِّي لَعَفَّارٌ لِّمَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدَىٰ.

“But, without a doubt, I am (also) He that forgives again and again, to those who repent, believe and do right.¹”

Another is when the Exalted says,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَولَئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ.

“Those who believed and those who suffered exile and fought (and strove and struggled) in the path of Allah - they have hope of the Mercy of Allah: and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful².”

¹ Surah 20 Taha Verse 82.

² Surah 2 al-Baqarah Verse 218.

Similarly, as in other verses, and in cases where the verses are expressed in the absolute terms, such conditions still apply. Indeed, says the Sublime and Generous Speaker,

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ اجْتَرَحُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ أَنْ نَجْعَلَهُمْ كَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ.

“What! Do those who seek after evil ways think We shall hold them equal with those who believe and do righteous deeds.¹”

Allah, the Exalted, exclaims,

أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَالْمُفْسِدِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الْمُتَّقِينَ كَالْفُجَّارِ.

“Shall We treat those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, the same as those who make mischief on Earth?²”

It has become clear from the preceding and a known fact that mere hope without action and deeds are but illusions and little wishful thinking, while at the same time only works and efforts can be the root of hope and good opinion of Allah.

We have now talked about this at some length to explain these two matters, namely pleading Divine Pre-determination while abandoning Divine Commandments and entertaining fond hopes about forgiveness while embarking on the forbidden and putting off repentance. This topic we have elaborated in a book called, Religious Counsels [*an-Nasaihi ad-Diniyyah*]. Whoever wants more over and above what appears here should seek it there. Both are sufficient with the help of Allah and the blessings of His Prophet, for those who embrace righteousness and avoid wickedness. There is no conformity to achievement for me except with Allah’s Will, in Him is my trust and reliance, and to Him, I return.

Do Not Seek Repentant Before Committing a Sin

Similarly, it is not proper for a man to talk to himself about repentance before slipping into disobedience. For that may make it easy for him to slip into such disobedience, and encourage the heart to go into it. Then

¹ Surah 45 al-Jathiya Verse 21.

² Surah 38 Sad Verse 28.

such a man becomes like one who eats poisoned food while relying on the antidote to cure him of it? And lo and behold! That then becomes the reason for his ruin or illness. Because he may take the remedy without the requisite conditions and perhaps other unanticipated factors might intervene, factors like procrastination and delay and the intention to revert to the ways.

Avoidance of Committing a Sin is Easier Than Repentance

Now you should know that avoidance of sins and distancing oneself away from acts of disobedience is far easier in many ways than repenting after plunging into them. Allah, the Glory is His, Exalted is He, had duly commanded His servants to repent from sins as soon as they slip into them, and He has advised them to do that and promised them to accept such repentance out of His Mercy. And indeed, in such terms, He attributes Himself in His Glorious Book saying,

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَعْفُو عَنِ السَّيِّئَاتِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ.

“And He is the One that accepts repentance from His Servants and forgives sins: and He knows well all that ye do.”¹

“He Who forgives sin accepts Repentance².” غَافِرِ الذَّنْبِ وَقَابِلِ التَّوْبِ.

Repentance is Not Accepted Without its Prescribed Conditions

Now, repentance has conditions which are part and parcel of it. Without them, repentance is incomplete, and it is unacceptable unless all of them are there and have been fulfilled in the prescribed manner.

The foremost amongst them and the most important is a sincere, truthful regret on sins of the past. Says the Prophet, upon who be Allah’s blessings and peace, “Regret is repentance,” meaning that if the ‘regret’ itself is sound and sincere and truthful, it nearly amounts to fulfil all the conditions of repentance.

¹ Surah 42 ash-Shura Verse 25.

² Surah 40 Gafir Verse 3.

Another of its conditions is to resolve not to return to the sin as long as one is alive. Thus he should not, while engaged in repentance, have anything to do with any of the sins from which he is repenting.

Also, it is incumbent upon the penitent to free himself from all the wrongs that he has committed against fellow beings, be it to do with life, reputation or possession. He should do his utmost to fulfil this. Then he should make up such binding prescribed prayers as he has missed as well as Alms [*zakat*] and Fasting and similar things. For, indeed his repentance is not accomplished nor qualifies for acceptance before Allah unless he fulfils all that. And what is difficult to achieve at present, he should resolve to make up as possible and to the limits of his resources, allowing for no procrastination, no lack of moral vigour and self-indulgence.

After which, he should forever be between hope and fear: fear lest his repentance is not accepted because he has failed to fulfil the required conditions and qualifications, and hope that Allah, out of His Mercy and Munificent, will accept his repentance and forgive his sins, and out of His Generosity efface his disobedience, for He is indeed the Most Merciful of the Merciful and the Incomparably Generous.

Signs of the True Repentant

And among the signs of a sincere penitent is the dedication to spiritual sorrow and meekness, frequent weeping and Allah-thrilled humility, ceaseless supplication for forgiveness and desertions of the haunts wherein he disobeyed Allah, also severing ties with evil companions and wicked companions among the evildoers.

Now, sins comprise cardinal sins and minor sins. It is imperative to be cleansed and repent from all of it, but repentance is more binding and more emphasised in the case of the cardinal ones. The minor sins may be expiated by Prayers, participate in community and by righteous acts. He, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "From a Prayer to the next will expiate what transpires in-between as long as the cardinal sins are avoided. And Friday prayers until the next Friday prayers expiate what transpires between them as long as the cardinal sins are avoided.

And from one Ramadan until the next Ramadan will expiate what transpires in-between as long as cardinal sins are avoided.” In another narration, he, upon who be Allah’s blessings and peace said,

وَاتَّبِعِ السَّيِّئَةَ الْحَسَنَةَ تَمْحُهَا.

“And do follow up an evil deed with a good one that (the latter) may erase (the former).”

Our Lord, Sublime is His Power says,

إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرَى لِلذَّاكِرِينَ.

“For those things that are good remove those that are evil: be that the word of remembrance to those who remember (their Lord)¹.”

What is a Cardinal Sin?

The learned, may Allah show them mercy, have differed in their definition and enumeration of the cardinal sins, so much so that some of them have said, “A cardinal sin is uncertain and ambiguous! It has been concealed in the definition so that a man may be on his utmost guards and alertness against acts of disobedience, all the time in fear lest the particular sins he is committing should belong to the class of cardinal sins.” Like what they have said about Allah’s Most Sublime Name [*Ismullahil Aa’zham*], among the Names of the Exalted (that which when calling upon in an invocation the Lord will bestow one’s request), similarly about the particular time of the day on Friday, also the Night of Power [*Lailatul Qadar*] among the nights of the month of Ramadan, and these have its supporting facts. However, what is conclusive and to be relied upon in such cases are the narrations of *Sahih Hadiths* which have address matters like these, for success lies but with Allah [*wabillahir-taufiq*].

Indeed, the Prophet, upon who be Allah’s blessings and peace, said, “Lo and behold! Should I not proclaim to you the greatest of the greatest sins! They said, ‘You may indeed! You may indeed!’ He said, “Joining partners with Allah, then being wicked and unkind to the two parents, then lying and giving false evidence and false testimony.”

¹ Surah 11 Hud Verse 114.

In another narration, he, upon who be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "Avoid the Seven Ruinous Sins; joining partners with Allah, practising black magic, killing a soul which Allah has forbidden save in a just cause, consuming from the wealth of orphans, taking usury [*Riba*], flight from the Holy War, and accusing innocent, chaste women of adultery." There are many Hadiths narrations in this category.

Indeed, the Shaykh Imam Ahmad bin Muhammad ibn Hajar al-Haytami, may Allah bestow mercy upon him, has authored a comprehensive book whose title is "*az-Zawdjir 'an Iqtihamial-Kabair* (Severe Admonitions against Committing Cardinal Sins), and he recounted over four hundred types of cardinal sins. However, he counted many acts which do not coincide with the cardinal sins. But they have been hedged around at the beginning with such conditions and qualifications and at the end with provisos that they almost escape any objections that can be made regarding their place among the cardinal.

Also, the Shaykh Abu Talib al-Makki, may Allah bestow mercy upon him mentioned in "The Nourishment of Hearts" [*Qut al-Qulub*] that cardinal sins are seventeen; then he counted them and said, "Cardinal sins are seventeen. Four belong to the hearts, and they are (i) joining partners with Allah, (ii) persistence in sin, (iii) despair from the Mercy of Allah and (iv) a sense of peace and security with Allah's false presentation. Then four belong to the tongue and they are (v) accusing people falsely or slandering, (vi) giving false testimony, (vii) sorcery and this means every action which changes a man or part of his limbs and (viii) the (plunging) oath, which invalidates what is true or affirms what is not. Then there are another three belong to the stomach and they are (ix) consuming the wealth of an orphan without justice, (x) accepting usury [*Riba*] and (xi) consuming everything which intoxicates. Then there are two of the private parts [*faraj*] which are (xii) to commit adultery and (xiii) sodomy or homosexuality. Another two belongs to the hands which are (xiv) to kill and (xv) to steal. One belongs to the leg which is (xvi) to run from a battlefield in the cause of Allah [*fisabililla*]. Then one belongs to the whole body which is (xvii) unkind and undutiful to the two

parents.” That concludes his statement and indeed, what a beautiful, comprehensive statement which is almost rare encountered in this topic.

So let it be your duty, thus may Allah bestow mercy upon you, to do your utmost to avoid all sins, whether they are minor and cardinal sins. For it may well be that a small sin may wreak more significant harm on its perpetrator. Sins are like fire; the flames alone can gut a big village.

From Ali Zainal Abidin bin Hussain, may Allah be pleased with both of them, who said, “Verily Allah, the Exalted has concealed three in three, He (first) has concealed His Pleasure in acts of obedience to Him, so belittle nothing of obedience for it may well be the case that the Exalted’s Pleasure is therein. Then He (second) has concealed His Displeasure in acts of disobedience to Him, so belittle nothing in acts of disobedience for His displeasure may well be therein. Then He (third) has concealed His Love in His creations, therefore, belittle none of them, for He may be the loved of Allah, the Exalted,” end of quote.

It has also been recorded that “it no more consider a minor sin if it is persisted in, on the contrary, sin is not considered a cardinal sin if immediate supplications of forgiveness accompany it.” Some of the virtuous predecessors have said, “He who supplicates for forgiveness while persisting in the sin is like mocking his Lord.”

While another report said, “Seeking for forgiveness while not rooting out the sin is the repentant of the deceitful. Another said, “If you disobey Him while you are aware that He sees you then you are mocking and being contemptuous in Allah’s sight, then if you disobey Him and you think that He does not see you then you become an unbeliever.” Another said, “Whosoever disobeys Allah while laughing, will enter Hell while crying.”

Another record said, “a believer sees his sins as a mountain of rocks with him beneath it, which is being chiselled away, all the time fearing when it will fall on him. While the hypocrite sees his sins like a fly resting in his nose, and he shoos him away with his hand thinking it will fly away.

نَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ أَنْ يُجَمِّلَنَا بِسِتْرِهِ، وَيَسْتَرَنَا بِعَافِيَّتِهِ وَيُعَافِيَنَا مِنْ مُخَالَفَتِهِ وَعَصْيَانِهِ وَإِضَاعَةِ أَمْرِهِ

We supplicate to Allah to adorn us with His watchful shroud, and bestow upon us His wellbeing, and save us from disobedience to Him and sinning contrary to His Commandment and neglect of His ordinance.

فَإِنَّهُ نِعْمَ الْمُسْتَعَانُ وَعَلَيْهِ التُّكْلَانِ، وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ.

For indeed, He is the Incomparably Best in whom our trust should repose, and there is neither strength nor resource save in Allah, the Exalted and the Immensely Great.



Chapter Eight

The Eighth Category

دَعْوَةُ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَأَهْلِ الْكُفْرِ

A Call to Polytheist and Infidels or Unbelievers

The polytheists are those who call upon and join gods other than Allah; Glory belongs to Allah! Who is high above all that they say! And the Exalted is much Greater beyond measure to what they call to. They have a few categories, amongst them the polytheist, the atheist and rejecters and others. They are all astray and folds upon folds of darkness; except that some are more astray and more taken by unbelief and making more grave, false charges and tell more grave lies. Neither none of them has an argument nor proof in any manner whatsoever.

Way to Call the Polytheist to Allah

Here we lay down the method to call them unto Allah and to His Oneness, and the confession to Him, His Transcendent with Divine Nature and Divinity, with no partner in that and neither opponent to Him.

Allah, the Exalted, says,

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ. “Know, therefore that there is no god but Allah¹.”

The Exalted says, إِنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَسِعَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا.

¹ Surah 47 Muhammad Verse 19

“But the God of you all is the One Allah: there is no god but He: all things He comprehends in His knowledge¹.”

The Exalted says, إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ.

“For Allah is one God: Glory belongs to him, far Exalted is He above having a son.²”

And the Exalted says, وَالَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ.

“And your God is one God: there is no god but He³.”

The Exalted says,

شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُوا الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ.

“There is no god but He: That is the witness of Allah, His angels and those endued with knowledge, standing firm on justice. There is no god but He, the Exalted in Power, the Wise⁴”.

The Exalted says, وَمَنْ يَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ لَا بُرْهَانَ لَهُ بِهِ.

“If anyone invokes, besides God, any other god, he has no authority, therefore⁵.”

The Exalted says,

وَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ.

“And call not, besides Allah, on another god. There is no god but He. Everything that exists will perish except His face. To Him belongs the command. And to Him will ye be brought back⁶.”

And the Exalted says,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا.

¹ Surah 20 Taha Verse 98.

² Surah 4 an Nisaa Verse 171.

³ Surah 2 Baqarah Verse 163.

⁴ Surah 3 Ala_Imran Verse 18.

⁵ Surah 23 Mukminin Verse 117.

⁶ Surah 28 Qasas Verse 88.

“Allah forgives not (the sin of) joining other gods with Him: but he forgives Whom He pleases with other sins than this: to set up partners with God is to devise a sin most heinous deed¹.”

And the Exalted says, إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ.

“For false worship is indeed the highest wrongdoing².”

And the Exalted says,

إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ.

“Whoever joins other gods with Allah, Allah will forbid him in the garden, and the fire will be his Abode. There will for the wrongdoers, be no one to help³.”

If this immensely horrifying severity is assigned and hugely abominable warning given regarding one who joins another god to Allah, and attributes a partner to Him in Divinity although he acknowledges Allah’s Divinity and Divine Nature, then pray what a hideously evil state he is in and what a severe punishment awaits the atheist, who says that the universe has no God, and God is other than Allah, the Holy and Transcendent is He above such statement and fabrication as mentioned,

أُولَئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ.

“They are like cattle, nay more misguided: for they are heedless of warning⁴.”

Let it be noted that cattle and other animals, indeed, plants and inanimate objects acknowledge, confess and bear witness to their Creator and to the One that causes their existent with Divine Nature, Oneness and Sovereign, and if they converse, they would have proclaimed as such and reveal it accordingly as Allah, the Exalted, says,

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ.

¹ Surah 4 an Nisaa Verse 48.

² Surah 31 Luqman Verse 13.

³ Surah 5 al-Maidah Verse 72.

⁴ Surah 6 al-Araf Verse 179.

“The Seven heavens and earth and all beings therein declare His glory: there is not a thing but celebrates His Praise.¹”

And the Exalted says,

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ يَتَفَيَّأُ ظِلَالُهُ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَالْشَّمَائِلِ سُجَّدًا لِلَّهِ وَهُمْ دَاخِرُونَ. وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ دَابَّةٍ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ. يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ.

“Do they not look at Allah’s creation, (even) among (inanimate) things - how their (very) shadows turn around, from the right and the left, prostrating themselves to Allah, and that most humbly? And to Allah do obeisance all that is in the heavens and on earth, whether moving (living) creatures or the angels: for none are arrogant (before their Lord). They all revere their Lord High above them, and they do all that they are commanded.²”

Desert Arab Polytheist Acknowledged Allah is the Creator

Now whereas Desert Arabs had been given discernment and support with intelligence that other people have not been assisted with, they did not reject the existence of the Truth [*al-Haqq*], Transcendent and Exalted is He. Indeed, they confessed, that Allah exists and that He is the Creator of everything and He is the Sustainer of them all as Allah Himself so states in more than one verse in His book in His Exalted Word,

وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ.

“If you ask them, Who created them, they will certainly say, Allah.³”

And His Exalted words,

وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ.

“If you ask them Who created the heavens and the earth and subjected the sun and the moon to His law, they will undoubtedly reply, ‘Allah’⁴.”

¹ Surah al-Israa Verse 44.

² Surah 16 Nahl Verses 48-50.

³ Surah 43 Az-Zukhurf Verse 87.

⁴ Surah 29 Al-Ankabut Verse 61.

The Exalted says,

قُلْ لِمَنِ الْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ. سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ.

“Say: To whom belong the earth and all beings therein? (Say) if ye know!” They will say “To Allah!” Say: “Yet will ye not receive admonition.¹”

There are many more verses of the Quran which say explicitly what we have said in respect with the Arab Polytheist.

Polytheist Arab Thinks the Idols Can Bring Them Closer to Allah

What Allah says about them clarifies how they seek to explain why they join other gods to Allah,

مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَى

“We only serve them so that they may bring us nearer to Allah².”

In other words, they have appointed them as interceders and they intend that their act of worshipping should draw them nearer to Allah. By doing this, they err. Nevertheless, they admit that the Truth [*al-Haqq*] does exist. Allah is their creator and the Creator of everything. However, the idols which they have worshipped, they have done so only so that they may bring them closer to Him. Yet these Arab polytheists used to look up Allah in time of hardships and resort to the existence of Allah when they wanted emergencies to be lifted and misfortunes relieved. They do not seek that nor supplicate for that except Him just as Allah says in His Book when talking about them like the example in His Exalted says,

وَإِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فِي الْبَحْرِ ضَلَّ مَنْ تَدْعُونَ إِلَّا إِلَهُه.

“When distress seizes you at sea, those that you call upon - besides Himself - leave you in the lurch!³”

The Exalted words, وَمَا بِكُمْ مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ إِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فَإِلَيْهِ تَجْتَرُونَ.

¹ Surah 23 al-Mu'minin Verses 84-85.

² Surah 39 az-Zumar Verse 3.

³ Surah 17 Al-Israa' Verse 67.

“And you have no good thing, but it is from Allah: and when you are touched by distress, unto Him, you cry with groans¹.”

That they cry in humility and pleas for assistance. In Hadith narrations, it was mention that when the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said to one of them, “How many gods do you have?” He replied: “Ten.” Then he upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace said, “To which one do you turn to in times of distress?” And he answered, “To Allah.” Then the Prophet said, “Submit to Allah O Mister! Embrace Islam for you does not have a god save Allah.” He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, also said to another one of them explaining to him to the true God, “He is the one, whom when your mount is lost in the vast desert, you call and surely He returns your mount to you; and when a year of drought befalls you and you call on Him, he will cause to sprout and grow the leaves and plants for you.”

Thus I cannot conceive that someone who can think except that he turns to and worship to a God. Worshipping fits into the nature in which he has thus been created or that in the very state in which he is created, therefore the created will bear witness upon God’s Sovereign who created him. Some get it right on this matter and achieve enlightenment while other errs and took the wrong path. Thus there is no God except Allah; He is indeed the Exalted in Power, the Wise.

All Creations Points to His Oneness

Hence for all His crafted works, Transcendent is He, his creations and beings of inconceivable splendour which He has filed His earth and His heavens, all bear witness to His Divine Nature, and proclaim to Him His Oneness. The poet had indeed spoken well when he wrote,

أَيَا عَجَبًا كَيْفَ يَعْصِي الْإِلَٰهَ * أَمْ كَيْفَ يَجْعَلُهُ الْجَاهِدُ

It’s incredible, how the sinners can go on sinning

Or yet they dare to renege on His Command,

وَلِلَّهِ فِي كُلِّ تَحْرِيكَةٍ * وَتَسْكِينَةٍ أَثَرٌ شَاهِدٌ

¹ Surah An-Nahl Verse 53.

Allah is present and observed all the movement

And even every inaction is being watched over,

وَفِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَهُ آيَةٌ * تَذُلُّ عَلَى أَنَّهُ وَاحِدٌ

And in everything, you can see His sign and superscription.

Thus it reveals that Allah is but One, the Only One.

Once when the Companions of the Cave [*ashabul Kahfi*] were called upon to worship other than Him, Transcendent and Exalted is He, and to acknowledge the false divinity to a sustained servant who claimed to be God, they rejected the persuasion, did not acknowledge nor did they confess, and this is because Allah injected light into their hearts, and injected into them belief and Faith in Him, the Exalted as mentioned,

فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَنْ نَدْعُو مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَهًا لَقَدْ قُنَّا إِذَا شَطَطًا. هَؤُلَاءِ قَوْمُنَا اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً لَوْلَا يَأْتُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِسُلْطَانٍ بَيِّنٍ فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا. وَإِذِ اعْتَزَلْتُمُوهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَأْوُوا إِلَى الْكَهْفِ يَنْشُرْ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَيَهَيِّئْ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مَرْفَعًا.

Then they said: “Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth: never shall we call upon any god other than Him: if we did, we should indeed have uttered an enormity! These our people have taken for worship gods other than Him: why do they not bring forward an authority clear (and convincing) for what they do? Who doth more wrong than such as invent a falsehood against Allah? When ye turn away from them and the things they worship other than Allah, betake yourselves to the Cave: Your Lord will shower His mercies on you and dispose of your affair towards comfort and ease¹.”

Pharaoh's Magicians Put Faith in the One God

That is the same for which the accursed Pharaoh brought the sorcerers to challenge as false using their intrigue and sorcery against the truth which was proclaimed by *Musa* (Moses) and *Harun* (Aaron), may peace be

¹ Surah 18 Kahfi Verse 14-16.

upon them. Thus when they came to know and confirm with certainty that the mission with which *Musa* and *Harun* have been sent, peace be upon them, is a Divine Heavenly matter, that it is irresistible, unstoppable and unconquerable, they acknowledged the Truth [*al-Haqq*] thus submitted to it and embraced Islam and believed in Allah and His Oneness as mention,

قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ. رَبِّ مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ.

“We believe in the Lord of Harun and Musa¹.”

They were not deflected from that nor turned away by the threats of the accursed Pharaoh, threats of cutting off their hands and feet on opposite sides and their crucifixion on the trunks of palm trees. Indeed in their riposte to him, they made light of his warning in,

لَنْ نُؤْثِرَكَ عَلَى مَا جَاءَنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالَّذِي فَطَرَنَا فَاقْضِ مَا أَنْتَ قَاضٍ إِنَّمَا تَقْضِي هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا. إِنَّا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّنَا لِيَغْفِرَ لَنَا خَطَايَانَا وَمَا أَكْرَهْتَنَا عَلَيْهِ مِنَ السِّحْرِ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى.

“Never shall we regard you like more than the clear signs that have come to us, or than Him Who created us! So decree what you desire to decree: for you canst only decree about the life of this world. For us, we have believed in our Lord: may He forgive our faults, and the magic to which you didst compel us: For Allah is Best and Most Abiding².”

Then Pharaoh, may Allah cursed him, having found that he has no answer and cannot dissuade them from faith in Allah since he knew that he does not argue nor dissuasive strength, he changed tack and said,

آمَنْتُمْ لَهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ آذَنَ لَكُمْ.

“Believe you in Him before I give you permission?”³

Thus showing his arrogance, in trying to show his power in defence of what is useless and absurd, because faith in Allah and proclamation of His Oneness has an overpowering awe and fear presence which no one in his right mind can resist, nor rebut it because the reason

¹ Surah 7 Al-A'raf Verses 121-122.

² Surah 20 Taha Verse 72-73.

³ Surah 20 Taha Verse 71.

is that the matter is so clear and manifest, built upon arguments and in harmony with decisive proofs, both logical and intellectual.

You should be enlightened and ponder over it as it deserves to be considered since it is an important matter. It is almost being hinted at in what Allah, the Exalted, says in several verses like,

وَمَنْ يَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ لَا بُرْهَانَ لَهُ بِهِ.

“If anyone invokes any other god besides Allah, he has no excuse thereof¹.”

And in His Exalted words,

مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءَ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ.

“If not Him, you worship nothing but names which you have named - you and your fathers - for which Allah has sent down no authority.²”

In the words of the Exalted respecting the Companions of the Cave,

هَؤُلَاءِ قَوْمُنَا اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً لَوْلَا يَأْتُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِسُلْطَانٍ بَيِّنٍ فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا.

“Our people have taken for worship gods other than Him: why do they not bring forward an authority clear (and convincing) for what they do? Who does more wrong than such as invent a falsehood against Allah?³”

Now whoever claims there is another god along with Allah will have absolutely no argument standing up in his favour; indeed, his argument in proof of that claim is manifestly null and void and impossible. For this reason, the claimant shifts to another position in the same manner as did the Pharaoh may Allah cursed him.

Similarly, the King Nimrod, in a narrative Allah recorded about him, where he argues with Ibrahim, the Friend of Allah [*Khalilallah*], upon whom be blessings and peace, as in the words of the Exalted,

¹ Surah 23 Mukminin Verse 117:

² Surah 12 Yusuf Verse 40:

³ Surah 18 al-Kahf Verse 15.

أَمْ تَرَى إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ أَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا أُحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ.

“Have you not turned your vision to one who disputed with Abraham about his Lord, because Allah granted him power?” Abraham said: “My Lord is He Who gives life and death.” He said: “I give life and death.” Said Ibrahim, “But it is Allah who causes the sun to rise from the East, do you then cause it to rise in the West?” Thus was he confounded who (in arrogance) rejected faith. Nor does Allah give guidance to people unjust.¹”

Oneness is Bountiful, and its Fruit is Obedience

Now, you should know that belief in the Oneness of Allah [*Tawhid*] is the most sublime, most magnificent bounty and the most beneficial for the people of the world and the Hereafter. It is, therefore, a binding duty for whosoever Allah has, out of generosity bestowed this bounty upon to recognise the status of Allah’s bounty on him. Then he should work to protect it and be continuously engaged in offering gratitude for it, and cherish the happy desire that the bounty will always abide with him. After that it is a binding duty upon him to strive to strengthen his faith in the Oneness of Allah and consolidate it and fortify it, by constant dedication to virtuous character, righteous actions and honest in obedience to Allah, all of which are the branches of Oneness of Allah and the fruits of Faith. At the same time be cautious, alert and keep clear of the opposites, namely misbehaving and disapproved actions which will weaken Faith and cause it to shake and falter immediately and later on, especially at the time of death. Allah, the Exalted says,

ثُمَّ كَانَ عَاقِبَةَ الَّذِينَ أَسَاءُوا السُّوءَى أَنْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا بِهَا يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ

“In the long run evil in the extreme will be the end of those who do evil: for that, they rejected the Signs of Allah, and held them up to ridicule.”²”

¹ Surah 2 Baqara Verse 258

² Surah 30 ar-Rum Verse 10.

He, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said:

لَا يَزْنِي الزَّانِي حِينَ يَزْنِي وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ، وَلَا يَسْرِقُ السَّارِقُ حِينَ يَسْرِقُ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ، وَلَا يَشْرَبُ الْخَمْرَ حِينَ يَشْرَبُهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ.

“The fornicator does not commit fornication and remains a believer while committing fornication, the thief does not steal and remains a believer while stealing and those who drink liquor does not drink liquor and remains a believer while drinking it.”

The virtuous predecessors, may Allah, the Exalted, show them mercy, used to say, “Acts of disobedience are the herald of unbelief. Let the believer employs maximum effort and resources to protect, strengthen, fortify his faith and stabilises its pillars. Then let him seek assistance from Allah while he exercises patience and perseveres in that constantly until death comes to him.”

Faith is Needed to Defend Yourself

You should know that Faith [*Iman*] is base of all foundation, the most precious invaluable item thus the extremely rare. At the same time, it is the most dangerous and the most difficult to protect, which is in most need of constant, tender care and attention as in most valuable and precious thing would need care and special attention, thus to such an ideal do believers live and commit themselves. Indeed, a believer who is ardently anxious of his religion, cautiously protective of his faith and certainty is forever supplicating to Allah and humbling himself before His Majesty that he may stand him firm in his belief and his faith, and that He may not let his heart deviate after He has guided him to His Oneness and Cognizance. He should be in fear lest he stripped of it and his faith unstable and shaky. Indeed, one of the righteous predecessors used to swear that no one will feel secure or at peace when his faith is stripped off him except those who are stripped of it. It has been said that Iblis may Allah cursed him, said, “He has broken my back who supplicates to Allah to grant him a felicitous end, [*Husnul-khatimah*] (that is, died while in faith). Iblis said, “When will such men feel satisfied and amaze at his deeds. I fear that he understands the nature of the thing.”

This is such a crucial and dependence issue which all else revolves. It is encumbrances for an intelligent person who believes in paying more considerable attention than to this matter, and he must be more ardently anxious about, and strive more assiduously for security of his faith in the Oneness of Allah and safety of Faith, until he dies and leave the world on that, with the grace of Allah and best of His assistance and mercy that stands one firm in faith. For if he does depart from the world on that, he is secure from evil in its entirety and attains good in his entirety: all that for eternity. But if he departs from the world; otherwise, he suffers a manifest loss and suffers an eternal ruin, may Allah protect us from that!

The loss of the belief in the Oneness of Allah [*Tawhid*] and Faith [*Iman*] would render whatever one possesses of no benefit, whether enormous wealth or lots of deeds, even if the acts stretch from first people to the last. However, when one's *Tawhid* and *Iman* remain intact with him, then nothing can harm him even if he is disobedient and a sinner. Either Allah will forgive him or overlook his wrongdoings. And also if He does punish him, the punishment is limited in time. It is not eternal nor everlasting. Indeed, a believer does not stay forever in hell but gets out of it if he has an atom weight of faith.

Possibly Allah has commanded in his believing servants to die in Faith [*Iman*] and Islam. He has described His prophets, messengers and the righteous among His servants that they supplicate for that from Him and counsel one another in His name. So ardently anxious are they because they hold it in such high esteem, and so eager that the blessings may not pass away. Allah, the Exalted says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ.

“O ye who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not except in the state of Islam.”¹

وَوَصَّى بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَى لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ.

¹ Surah 3 Ala Imran Verse 102.

“And this was the legacy that Ibrahim left to his sons, and so did Ya’qub: ‘O my son! Allah has chosen the Faith for you: then die not except in the Faith of Islam.’¹

The Exalted tells about Yusuf upon whom peace,

أَنْتَ وَلِيّ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ تَوَفَّنِي مُسْلِمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ.

“You are my Protector in this world and the Hereafter, You takes my soul at death as one submitting to Your Will as a Muslim, and unite me with the righteous.”²

Then the Exalted says relating the parable of the believers among sorcerers when the Pharaoh, Allah cursed him, gave them the dire warning,

وَمَا تَنْقِمُ مِنَّا إِلَّا أَنْ آمَنَّا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّنَا لَمَّا جَاءَتْنَا رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَتَوَقَّنَا مُسْلِمِينَ.

“But you (Pharaoh) do wreak your vengeance on us simply because we believed in the Signs of our Lord when they reached us! Our Lord! Pour out on us patience and constancy, and take our souls onto You as Muslims (who bow to Your Will).”³

Those who hold on to *Tawhid* will be safe

There are many hadith narrations from the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, that brings good news for those who hold on to *Tawhid* and *Imam*, that is those who died without attributing any partners to Allah, may he be safe hellfire and success in Heavens and many more reports that shows the different status and degrees. The Messenger of Allah, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace said, “Whosoever bears witness that there is no god except Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, and that Jesus is the servant of Allah, His Messenger and His Word, which He bestowed on Maryam, and a Spirit proceeding from Him, and that Paradise is true and Hell-Fire is true, Allah will cause him to enter Paradise with whatever

¹ Surah 2 al-Baqarah Verse 132.

² Surah 10 Yusuf Verse 101.

³ Surah Al-A’raf Verse 126.

deeds that he has.” In another version, Imam Muslim recorded, “Whosoever bears witness that there is no god save Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, Allah forbids Hell-Fire to him.”

Once a Bedouin came to the Prophet, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, and said, “O Messenger of Allah, which are the two qualifying positions (that is to enter Paradise or Hell)?” And he replied, “Whosoever dies while not associating anything whatsoever with Allah enters Paradise, and whosoever while associating anything with Allah enters Hell-fire.” And he, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said to Mu’adh, “O Mu’adh! No servant (of Allah) sincerely and truthfully bears witness in his heart that there is no god save Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and messenger except Allah, the Exalted forbids Hell-fire to him,” He said, “O Messenger of Allah! Shall I tell people that they may delight in the good news?” He said, “Consequently, they may let themselves go!” Later Mu’adh made known of this news at the time of his death, out of fear lest he is guilty of having concealed this knowledge.

And he, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said, “Verily, Allah forbids the Hell-fire whosoever says, “There is no god but Allah, (whereby he says it) aspiring for the good pleasure of Allah the Exalted.” And said he, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, to Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, “Go forth and whosoever you meet behind this wall who sincerely in his heart bears witnessed that there is god except for Allah then give him tidings of Paradise.”

Allah rights over the servant and reciprocate

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace said to Mu’adh bin Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, “O Mu’adh! Do you know what the obligation due to Allah from servants is and what is Allah’s reciprocal generosity to servants?” Mu’adh answered, “Allah and His Messenger know best”. He said, “Servants to Allah must worship and serve Him without associating anything with him: and Allah’s reciprocal generosity to His servants is not to punish whosoever does not associate anything with Him.” Mu’adh said, “O Messenger of Allah, should I not go forth

and deliver the good tidings to people.” He said: “Do not deliver the glad tidings to them lest they let themselves go [*tawakal*] (that is they may stop doing good deeds).”

And said he, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, “In the grave, when a Muslim is questioned he bears witness that there is no god save Allah Alone and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and that is the meaning of,

يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ.

“Allah will establish in strength those who believe, with the Word that stands firm, in this world and the Hereafter¹.”

And he, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said, “Jibril came to me and said, “Give glad tidings to your people that whosoever dies and does not associate anything to Allah will enter paradise”. I said, “O Jibril! Even if he steals and he commits fornication?” He said, “Yes!” I repeated, “Even if he steals and commits adultery?” He said, “Yes!” I repeated, “Even if he steals and commit fornication?” He said, “Yes! Indeed even if he drinks liquor!”

And he, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said, “Once came to me a messenger from my Lord and gave me a choice between half of my people entering paradise (on the one hand) and intercession [*ash-Shafa’a*] (on the other) and I chose intercession, and that is for whosoever dies and he does not associate anything with Allah.” And he, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said, “Says Allah, the Exalted, “O son of Adam! Were you to call on Me and put your hope to Me to forgive you upon whatever sins you committed. I will overlook it (and forgive you)! O son of Adam! Were you to come to Me with sins that pile up to the sky, and then you seek forgiveness, I will forgive you. O son of Adam! If you fill-up the earth with sins, then you meet Me while not associating anything with Me. I will come to you with the same quantity of forgiveness.”

¹ Surah 14 Ibrahim Verse 27.

And there is a famous Hadith narration about a man from this nation of Muhammad who will be shouted to, and ninety-nine scrolls of sins will be unrolled, each manuscript spreading as far as the eye can see. And they will be put into the one hand of the scale. Then Allah, the Exalted, will say, “You have with us one good, and verily there will be no injustice against you today”. A piece of paper will be brought for him containing the Testimony he bears that there is no god save Allah Alone. Then the man will say, “What is this piece of paper in comparison with the scrolls?” Then Allah, Blessed and Exalted is He, will say, “You will not suffer injustice.” The piece of paper will then be put in the other hand and it will tip the scale over and outweigh those scrolls and said he, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, “And nothing weights in comparison to the name of Allah,” that is a famous Hadith.

And it has come to our knowledge that a man was in Arafat at the time of Haj and that he took seven pebbles and invoked them to witness that he bears witness that there is no god save Allah Alone. Then, after that, he saw in a dream that he was standing before Allah to render an account, and that his deeds were counted and he was ordered to Hellfire. No sooner had he been brought to amongst the doors of Hell than a stone came and sealed the door and he was told, “Verily this is one of the rocks which you invoked to witness to the fact you bear witness that there is no god save Allah Alone and then he was ordered to Paradise, and then phrase ‘*La ilaha illallah*’ came and doors to Paradise were opened with Allah’s Bounty and Grace.

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

All praises and thank belong to Allah,
the Lord of All Universe



الْخَاتِمَةُ

Conclusion

مُوعَظُ وَمُذَكِّرَاتٍ

Admonition and Mutual Reminders

“In warning and mutual reminders to awaken the heedless who paid no attention to the religious issue, and also a reminder to those insightful wise, by the will of Allah, the Exalted.”

It consists of verses from Allah’s Book and the Hadith of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, also of the sayings deriving from companions of the Prophet and the followers [*Tabi’in*], those who came after the Companions and the words of the practising learned [*‘ulamaa*] and the virtuous servants [*solihin*] of Allah.

Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, says to honest and truthful Prophet:

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ.

“Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching.”¹

The Exalted also says,

فَمَنْ جَاءَهُ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ فَانْتَهَى فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ.

“Those who, after receiving direction from their Lord, desist, shall be pardoned for the past; their case is for Allah to judge, but those who

¹ Surah 16 an-Nahl Verse 125

repeat (the offence) are companions of the Fire: they will abide therein forever.”¹

Then the Exalted says,

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُلْ لَهُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا.
“Those are men - Allah knows what is in their hearts; so keep clear of them but admonish them, and speak to them a word that reach their very souls.”²

And says the Exalted,

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوا مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِ لَكَانَ حَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَأَشَدَّ تَنْبِيئًا. وَإِذَا لَا تَأْنِيَهُمْ مِنْ لَدُنَّا أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا. وَلَهْدَيْنَاهُمْ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا.

“But if they had done what they were (actually) told, it would have been for the best of them and would have gone farthest to strengthen their (faith). And We should then have given them from Our Presence a great reward. And We should have shown them the Straight Path.”³

The Messenger, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him,

تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ وَاعِظَيْنِ: نَاطِقٌ وَصَامِتٌ، فَأَمَّا النَّاطِقُ فِكِتَابُ اللَّهِ، وَأَمَّا الصَّامِتُ فَالْمَوْتُ.
“I have left amongst you two admonishers (advice to remind you): one Articulate and another Silent. As for the Articulate, that is the Book of Allah; and for the Silent, it is death.”

al-Irbadh bin Sariyah, may Allah be pleased with him said, “The Messenger of Allah, Allah bless and grant him peace, preached us with advice that enlightens and sent shudder to the heart, eyes pouring forth with tears. Then we said, “O Messenger of Allah! The sermon is like the preaching of one who bids farewell, give us counsel, therefore.” He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, answered, “I advise you to be fearful and be mindful of your duty to Allah, listen to advice and give due loyalty and obedience even if it be an Ethiopian slave who is to rule

¹ Surah 2 al-Baqarah Verse 275.

² Surah 4 an-Nisaa Verse 63.

³ Surah 4 an-Nisaa Verse 66-68.

over you, and that he who among you lives on after me will see many disagreements! So commit yourself to my practices [*Sunnah*] and the *Sunnah* of the rightly-guided, hold on to it tightly (as if biting with your molar). Beware of reformers who presented new views, and undoubtedly every innovation is an error.” Then he, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, also said, “It is as if death has been decreed upon other than us, and it is as if for other than us that the Truth [*al-Haqq*] has been made obligatory, and it is as if the dead whom we escort to the grave is on a short journey and will sooner be returned to us. We lay to rest their corpses and eat their estates as if we will live to eternity after them. We have forgotten every admonition and feel secure from all calamity.”

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, also said, “Whosoever fears will set out at nightfall, and whosoever sets out when the nightfall will arrive at the eternal home. Behold! The merchandise of Allah is dear and expensive. Behold! The merchandise of Allah is paradise.”

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said, “O you people! Repent to Allah before you die, and hasten forth to virtuous divine deeds before you are preoccupied, and deliver that which is due between you and your Lord by frequently invoking his Name.”

Then he, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, also said, “The Holy Spirit breathed into my soul: live as long as you live, you are indeed dead, and love whomsoever you love and you will indeed part from him, and do whatsoever you wish you will indeed be rewarded thereby.”

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said, “Be in the world as if you are a stranger or wayfarer, and count yourself among the grave-dwellers.”

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, also said, “Take advantage of five before five: of you youth before your old age, and your health before your sickness, and your affluence before your poverty, and your free time before your busy and your life before your death.”

And he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "Hasten forth to do good deeds before trials come like the portions of a night when a man will wake up in the morning a believer, and reaches the evening an unbeliever, and a believer in the evening and an unbeliever in the morning, selling his religion for a mess of worldly merchandise."

And he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "Is it enough that death be a reminder, and it is enough that certainty is our wealth and it is enough that worshipping keep us busy and occupied."

And he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "If you knew what I know, you would laugh but little and weep aplenty, and you would derive no pleasure from women in bed and you travel out to the open space alone humbly to seek proximity [*munajat*] with Allah."

And he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "There is hardly a morning which breaks upon a servant of Allah except that two angels descend and say: "O Lord, upon he who spends in charity, bestow a substitute, while the other says: O Lord! Upon he who withholds such, bestow ruin."

He, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "Show modesty to Allah as He deserves to be shown modesty". Then they said, "All praises and thanks belong to Allah, for indeed, we show modesty, and he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "Who shows such modesty to Allah as he deserves, would preserve the head and what it hears, and preserves the belly with what enters it, and remembers death and decay. And whosoever craves for the Hereafter will give up the adornment of this worldly life, and whosoever does that, has indeed shown modesty to Allah which he deserves to be shown."

He, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "There is not a single one exception amongst you that his Lord will speak to him directly without an interpreter, and he will look towards his right wonder and sees the deeds he has done and he will look towards the left and sees all the deeds he has committed and then he looks forward only to see nothing but the hellfire facing him. Fear then the Hell-fire even if it is by donation with a piece of 'date'."

And said he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, "Hasten ye forth to works of virtue before the seven (catch up with you): are you waiting but for a poverty that makes one forgetful or riches which spur one to excesses or sickness which impairs or decrepitude with wasted energy or death which suddenly gives the last gasp or the Dajjal, and he is the most evil absentee being awaited or the Hour and the Hour is most grievous and most bitter."

And said he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, "I am indeed the warner and death alters what it touches and the hour is the appointment."

He, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said to 'Aqabah bin 'Amir, may Allah be pleased with him, "Be mindful and hold back your tongue, and let staying in your house suffice you and cry over your misdeed."

And he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "May the one who submitted to the Allah prospers with whatever provision he has and he whom Allah makes content with what He has bestowed upon him."

He, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "The dead will have three escorts: his folk, wealth and deeds. Two return will return, and one remains. His folks and wealth will leave him and returns, and only his deeds remain with him."

And he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "A servant (of Allah) would cry out, "O my wealth! O my wealth!" In fact, out of his wealth, he has only three shares: whatever he eats is consumed, and whatever he wears will wear out, but whatever he donates, remains untouched (rewarded). Other than that, what is left goes to other people."

He, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "This world is home for he who does not have a place to live, and wealth for he who does not have wealth, he who gathers it has no brain."

And he, upon whom be Allah's blessings and peace, said, "A servant will not be free to take step on the Day of Judgement until he is asked four issues: about his life in what he spent or wasted it, and about

his deeds what he has done, and about his wealth, how he acquired and what he did with it, and about his body, how he tired it out.”

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said, “Paradise is surrounded with undesirable and Hell is surrounded with desires and temptations”.

He, upon whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said, “Whatever that is forthcoming will surely come (closer than you thought, that is, the end of worldly life) while the remote (distant prospective future) is that which is not a-coming.”

And he upon, whom be Allah’s blessings and peace, said, “There is no petitioning Allah after death, and there is no place after this world except Paradise or Hell-fire.”

Sayings of Saiyidina Abu Bakar

Abubakar ash-Siddiq, may Allah be pleased with him, when he was appointed Khalifa, “I have indeed been given authority over your affairs, and I am not the best of you. Indeed, the strongest of you is weak until I have secured his rights and the weakest of you is strong until I have wrested from him the rights of others. Now if I do well or he said (if) I stand in righteousness, help me and if you see me going astray, set me right.”

He, may Allah be pleased with him, also said, “Who hates himself for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and the gloried Allah will secure him from His displeasure.”

An Emotional Answer from Umar bin Al-Khattab

The Mother of Believers, Hafsa binti ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with her, narrated that she told her father, “O *Amirul-mukminin*: what will it matter if you wore a cloth softer than your cloth or ate food other than this when Allah has opened up territory for you and made sustenance abundant?” He, may Allah be pleased with him answered, “I will complain to your soul: do you not know the spare, difficult life which the Prophet of Allah, Allah bless him and gave him peace, endured?” He went on to recall it until she wept as a result. Then he said, “I said to you that I had two companions, both of whom walked along a path. And if I

indeed walk a path, other than their path, I will end up in a path other than theirs. Verily, in the Name of Allah, I will keep them company in their severe, hard life perchance, together with them, I will attain their tender life.” By his two companions, he meant the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace and Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, may Allah be pleased with him.

Usman Died a Shahid

Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “When the hostile assailants killed ‘Uthman bin ‘Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, they entered upon his treasury and found a coffer “treasurer box”. They said, “this must be what Uthman referred to as the ‘Booty’ of the Muslims”. So they broke it open and found a receptacle. They said, “there must be jewels in here!” They broke it open and found inside it a paper on it was written, “‘Uthman bears witness: There is no god except Allah Alone, no partner has He and that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger, The Hour will come, there is no doubt thereof and that Allah verily revives those in the graves, on that we live and upon that we die.”

Then they found that on top was written,

غَنِى النَّفْسِ يُغْنِي النَّفْسَ حَتَّى يَكْفَىهَا * وَإِنْ مَسَّهَا حَتَّى يَضُرَّ بِهَا الْفَقْرُ
فَمَا عُسْرَةٌ فَاصْبِرْ لَهَا إِنْ لَقِيَتْهَا * بِكَائِنَةٍ إِلَّا وَمِنْ بَعْدَهَا يُسْرُ

Self-contentment is to curb the self until it is under control

So even if penury touches it or harm engulfs it

When adversity visits, be patient and persevere

For soon you will find after it will come ease.

Anas, may Allah be pleased with him said, “it was dropped into the hands of the folk.”

Abdullah bin Salam, may Allah be pleased with him, asked those who were present when ‘Uthman was in the throes of death, “What was Uthman’s advice when he was in the throes of death?” They answered, “We heard him said, “O Lord! Unite the people of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, three times’. Abdullah bin Salaam said, “In the Name of He in Whose Hands my life is, if he did say they will never unite, then they would not unite until the Day of Judgement.”

Sayings of Ali, may Allah Honor him

Amirul Mukminin Ali bin Thalib, may Allah honor him, said “It is of no benefit when your wealth and children multiply but it is beneficial when your knowledge and good deeds multiply. It becomes immense when you do not show off to man the worship of your Lord. If you do and act beneficently, praise and thanks Allah, and if you do ill, you seek Allah’s forgiveness. There is no good in the world except in one of these two people: a man who commits a misdeed and hastens up with (repentance and a good deed): and a man who constantly hastens forth to good deeds.”

He, may Allah be pleased with him, also said (to his companions), “Safeguard and remind me of five things, even as you are busy chasing your highest aspirations (in worldly affairs), for these are most worthy of your utmost effort: (i) Let not the servant of Allah hope in other than his Lord; (ii) Do not fear anything other than for his misdeed; (iii) The ignorant should not feel ashamed to ask; (iv) A learned should not hesitate to say Allah knows best when someone asks him something he does not know and; (v) that patience about Faith is like the head to the body, for there is no Faith if one is impatience.”

Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, also said, “Fear of Allah [*Taqwa*] is to forsake the wilfulness of disobedience, and forsake any illusion on account of obedience.”

Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, also said, “The most difficult deeds are three: To render justice upon yourself; invoking the name of Allah, the Exalted, upon all matters and times, and sharing wealth with a brother.”

Character of Saiyidina Ali

Dhirar bin Dhamra al-Kannani, may Allah show him mercy, while describing Ali to Mu’awiyah, said, “I testify in the name of Allah that I saw him in one of his states when the night had cast down its veils, and the stars dazzled the sky, he fidgeted in his prayer niche [*mihrab*], hand on beard, the sway of the pained and weeping with sadness. It is as if I can still hear him right now and when he said, ‘O our Lord! O our Lord!’

as he humbled himself before Him and then he said, ‘O world! You want me to be susceptible to you or attract my heart? Far, very far (be the fire from me)! I have divorced you thrice. There is no return because your time-span is short, your life is despicable and your danger aplenty. Oh! Oh! How meagre the provisions and how long the journey and how lonely the road.” Dhirar said, “The tears of Mu’awiyah dripped down his beard and he could not stop them.”

It was narrated that ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “The Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, looked at Mus’ab bin ‘Umayr approach and with a skin wrapped around his body and said the prophet, “Look at this man, Allah has illuminated his heart. I saw him with his two parents serving him the best food and drink. Yet he gave that up for the sake of the love of Allah and the love of His Messenger to what you now see.”

Enlightening and Great Advice of Some Companions

When Khabbab bin al-Aratti, may Allah be pleased with him, fell sick and a group of Companions, may Allah be pleased with all of them, visited him, and they said, “Rejoice, O father of Abdullah! Your brothers have advanced (in death) ahead of you, and tomorrow you will meet them! He cried then said, “As far as I am concerned I have no sorrow at all but since you have reminded me of predecessors and brothers, indeed they have gone with their rewards intact. So what I fear is lest the reward of the deeds you have mentioned is what we have been given (while we were alive) after they were gone” meaning (given) into their affairs in this world.

Abdullah bin Mas’ud, may Allah be pleased with him, greeted, “Welcome to the two most disliked; Death and Poverty, in the Name of Allah, there is no difference in riches and poverty. I do not mind with which I am afflicted. Verily, Allah’s obligation upon either is binding. When it is riches, then it is a charity and when it is poverty, it is patient or perseverance.” Then he said, “I do not mind when I go back to my family in which state I see them, in easy circumstances or under trial and tribulations, because I do not wake in a state and crave for any other.”

He also said, “A man may enter into the presence of a ruler with his religion intact and come out with his religion gone.” He was asked, “How is that possible?” He answered, “Because he pleases the ruler with what attracts the anger of Allah, the Exalted.”

al-Imam al-Ghazali, may Allah, the Exalted, bestow mercy upon him, said, “The reason being that whosoever enters the presence of a ruler runs the risk of disobeying Allah, the Exalted, either via his action or silence or via his belief and he cannot escape one of these situations.”

‘Ammar bin Yasir, may Allah be pleased with both of them, used to observe a long period of silent, expressing of sadness and weeping. His words were generally about seeking protection from Allah against trials and tribulations.

When Abdullah bin Mas’ud, may Allah be pleased with him, built his house he invited ‘Ammar, may Allah be pleased with him, “Would you like to come and see the house I built?” So ‘Ammar went along, and upon seeing it, he said, “You built a mansion, you hope to live long but your death is near.”

Once Mu’az bin Jabal came to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, who exclaimed, “O Mu’az, how are you this morning?” He answered, “I am present with Allah as a believer.” Then Prophet said, “In every statement, there is a sign of credibility, and in every truth there is reality, so what makes your statement credible?” He answered, “O the Messenger of Allah, for every morning I am presence, by no means do I think I will last till the evening, for every evening I am presence, by no means do I think I will last till the morning, for every step I take I do not think I will be able to take the next step as if I am seeing every nation kneeling when calling upon to received their record books, and with them is either their prophet or the idols they worshipped other than Allah, the Exalted Supreme as if I see the punishment of those in hell and the rewards of those in heaven.” Then the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, who said, “You are ready, so continue your journey.”

Utbah bin Ghazwan said in a speech while he was in Basrah, “Indeed this world has given the sign that it time is short and it will elapse, then nothing good will spout out of it except the leftovers on a plate that is lick by its owner, then you will be moved from it to the permanent home so you should move on with all the good deeds that you have. We have been informed that the distance between two panels of the doors of heaven is like a journey of forty years. There will come a day when it will be overcrowded with people. I was also informed that if a stone were to drop into hell, it would take seventy years to reach the end, are you not amazed by it? Once I had an experience with Sa’ad bin Malik whereby we were amongst seven including the Prophet may Allah bless him and grant him peace, we had no food but the tree leaves until the corner of our mouths were sore with blistered. Then I found a piece of cloth and shared it with Sa’ad bin Malik (he is Sa’ad bin Abu Waqqash, may Allah be pleased with him) when there is amongst the seven of us a leader who is more in need. So remember your experience with the leaders who come after us!” In another narration, “I seek refuge with Allah from considering myself of high status while upon other as of lower status, no matter how you put to the test the leaders after me.” Al-Hassan Al-Bishri then said, “We did put to the test the leaders then came after them and found them stinky! (that is bad in conduct!)”

Salman al-Farisi, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “Three situations have so amazed me that I laughed: one who looks prospectively to the world while death is after him, and one who is heedless yet Allah has never neglected him, and he who laughs a full-throated laughter when he does not know whether the wrath of Lord of the Universe is upon him or is pleased with him. Yet three things have saddened me to tears: the parting with Muhammad, the master of the first and the last, as well as his party; and the horror of the Last Day; and standing before Allah, the Great Glorious is he, without knowing whether from there I will be taken to the Paradise or Hell-Fire.”

Huzaifah bin al-Yaman, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “A man gets into a situation when it becomes his duty to speak for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and he fails to speak then his heart never returns to

what it used to be, ever.” And he said, “A time will befall a people when none will get deliverance except he who makes the supplication like that of the drowning desperate.”

A man asked Abi ad-Darda, may Allah be pleased with him, “Give me counsel.” He answered. “Remember Allah, the Great and Glorious is He, when circumstances are easy, and His grace will visit when you are in difficulties, and when you come by the pleasures of this world, then look how it ends.” Then he, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “What a thing of beauty is the sleep of the prudent who did not fast, compare to the imbecile who kept vigil and their fasting.” Verily an atom worth of righteous deeds and actions from a man of certitude [*yaqin*] who fears Allah [*taqwa*] is better than a mountain's worth of deeds from the deluded.”

When Zainal ‘Abidin, ‘Ali bin al-Husayn, may Allah be pleased with both, died it was found that he used to maintain one hundred members of the Prophet’s family. When he advanced loan, he never used to recall it, and when he loaned clothes, he would not ask it back. And when he gave someone a promise, he would neither eat nor drink until he had fulfilled his pledge. Then when he perform an errand for someone and it fails, he would fulfil the errand from his resources. When he performed pilgrimage and went out on a military expedition, he never used to beat his mount. He also used to do one thousand prostrations of prayer, in each day and night.

al-Baqir Muhammad bin ‘Ali, may Allah be pleased with both said, “What is the world and what’s in it to hope for? Is it no more than a dress I wore or a mount I rode or a lady I married?” He, may Allah show him mercy, also said, “I used to have a friend. I esteemed him greatly in my eyes, and what gave him such great esteem was the low regard in which he held the world in his eyes.” He, may Allah show him mercy, said to his son, “O my son, beware of laziness and boredom because both are a key to all evil. For if you lazy, you will not fulfil a binding obligation to Allah and if you bored, you would not persevere in what is right and just.”

Great Advice from Sufyan ats-Tsauri

Sufyan ats-Tsauri, may Allah the Exalted show him mercy, said to Ja'far as-Shadiq, may Allah be pleased with him, "Narrate something to us." He said, "If Allah favours you with a bounty and you would like to retain it, then express praises and gratitude frequently to Allah, the Great and Glorious is he.

Allah, the Exalted, says, لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ.

"If ye are grateful, I will add more (favours) unto you¹."

If you think that provisions are delayed, then you should supplications for forgiveness as Allah, as the Exalted says,

اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا.

"And ask forgiveness from your Lord: for he is Oft-forgiving²."

If something saddens you, either from the authority or someone else, then frequently recite,

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ.

"There is no power or strength save with Allah, the Most-High, the Supreme in Glory," because that is the key to relief and a treasure from among the treasures of Paradise!

Sufyan ats-Tsauri, may Allah the Exalted show him mercy, also said, "I am amazed at the one self-conceit or egoist who admires his action or ability, how is he able to express the zikr, مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ.

"Allah's Will (be done)! There is no power save with Allah."

When Allah, the Exalted, says,

وَلَوْلَا إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ.

"Why did you not, as you went into your garden, say, 'Allah's Will (be done)! there is no power but with Allah³'!"

¹ Surah 14 Ibrahim Verse 7.

² Surah 71 Nuh Verse 1.

³ Surah 18 al-Kahf Verse 39.

I am also amazed at the person who fears and concern for this nation and yet does not say,

حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

“Allah is sufficiency, and supremely to be trusted is He,”¹

When Allah, the Exalted says,

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ. فَانْقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ لَمْ يَمَسْسَهُمْ سُوءٌ.

“Men said to them: “A great army is gathering against you, so fear them”: but it (only) increased their Faith; they said: “For us Allah suffice, and He is the best disposer of affairs. And they returned with Grace and Bounty from Allah; no harm ever touched them².”

Sufyan ats-Tsauri, may Allah the Exalted show him mercy, continued, I am also amazed at the person has plots hatched against him why he does not say, as Allah says,

وَأَقِضْ أَمْرِي إِلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ. فَوَقَاهُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِ مَا مَكَرُوا.

“I commit my affairs to Allah; for Allah (ever) watches over His servants”. “Then Allah saved him from (every) ill they plotted against³.”

And I am also amazed at he who is befallen with anguish why he does not say, (as Allah says)

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ. فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْغَمِّ وَكَذَلِكَ نُنْجِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ.

“There no god but Thou: Glory be to Thee: I was indeed wrong!” “So we listened to him: and delivered him from distress: and thus do We deliver those who have faith⁴.”

¹ Surah 3 ala Imran Verse 173.

² Surah 3 ala Imran Verses 173 – 174.

³ Surah 40 Ghafir Verse 43 – 44 .

⁴ Surah 21 al-Anbiyaa Verse 87-88.

Excellent Counsel from Umar bin ‘Abdul ‘Aziz

A man said to ‘Umar bin ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, may Allah show him mercy to him, “Give me counsel,” and he answered, “I counsel you to be fearful of Allah and mind your duties [*taqwa*] to Him, the Glorious and Great he is He, Who does not accept any other thing (from His servant other than *taqwa*) and does not bestow mercy save upon its devotees (who is *taqwa*) and does not give reward except on it (*taqwa*). Indeed, those who admonish for its sake are many and those who act upon it are but few!

Umar bin ‘Abd al-‘Aziz may Allah show him mercy, also said in his address, “(After praising Allah and sending blessings to the Prophet and his kin), after that, Verily, what you have in your possession are the spoils of the ruined and those who remain will give them up in the same way as those who have gone before. Do not you see that every day and night you bid farewell and send a death returning to Allah, the Exalted, and you put him in the crack of the earth, with no mattress or pillow. He has been stripped of all means living and departed from the dear ones, settled in the earth waiting to be judge, in need of the deeds he has sent ahead of him (if any) and in no need of what he has left behind. Behold, in the Name of Allah, I am counselling this to you but still, I do know the affairs of anyone among you people like I know about myself.” The man then said, “He took the edge of his dress to wipe the tears flowing from his eyes and that was the last speech he ever gave.”

Valuable Speeches of Al-Hassan Al-Bishri

al-Hasan al-Bisri, may Allah show him mercy, said, “Verily, a believer is his manager. He calls his soul to account in the Name of Allah, Great and Glorious is He. Verily. On the Day of Judgement, the account is light upon a folk who have called themselves to account in this world, and indeed it will be burdensome on people who have taken this matter without calling themselves to account. Indeed, a believer will be made by surprise with something of which he is enamoured and then say, in the Name of Allah I am fond of you and I need you, but there is no way of getting you; very far is that: the twain shall not meet. And when he misses place something and he will turn himself and say, “Why do I want this?

What do I have to do with this?” In the Name of Allah, I will never return to this, by the will of Allah, the Exalted. Verily, believers are captives in this world, and he strives to set his neck free and finds security in nothing until he meets Allah. He knows that he will be answerable for his ear and his eyes and his tongue and his limbs.”

al-Hasan al-Bisri, may Allah show him mercy, also said, “You will not attain the very essence of faith [*Iman*] until you cease attributing to other people a fault that is in you and until you begin remedying that fault in you and setting it right. Now if you do that you will find no sooner have you set right one fault than another fault emerges which you have not treated. And if you do that, your pre-occupation will be with yourself and the most beloved of servants of Allah, the Exalted, is he who is like that. And men have not heard of a day with more exposed nakedness nor more weeping eyes than the Day of Judgement.”

He may Allah show him mercy also said, “Mercy upon you O son of Adam, do you indeed have the strength of engaging war with Allah. Indeed, he who disobeys Allah has engaged the war with Allah. In the Name of Allah, I have met seventy men of the (battle) of Badr, the dress of many of them was wool. If you did see them, you would say they are madmen. If they did see your righteous ones, they would say these are people without morals to their names, and if they did see your evil ones they would say, “These will not escape on the Day of Rendering of Account”. In the Name of Allah, I have seen folks whom the world has more worthless to one of them than the earth beneath his feet. And I have indeed seen folks, one of whom will reach the evening and finds nothing except such food as can quench his hunger and he would say, “I will not put the whole of this in my stomach. I will offer some of it to Allah and he gives some of it as tilt [*sadaqa*] even if he needs it more than the person to whom he gives it as *sadaqa*.”

Good Advice from Thabit Al-Bunaani

Thabit al-Bunaani, may Allah bestow mercy upon him, said, “Verily, people who call in remembrance of the Name of Allah, the Great and Glorious, would sit together to call the Name of Allah, the Exalted, while

they may be carrying sins like mountains. Yet when they finish remembrance of Allah, the Exalted, they would rise from their sitting after the invoking Allah, free from sins, with no more burdens on them.”

Once he also said, “Verily, when a believer is placed in his grave, all his deeds will accompany him.”

He also said: “Verily, when a believer is resurrected from his grave, two angels meet him, the very same angels who were with him in the world. They would tell him: ‘Do not fear, and do not be sad, and receive the happy news of Paradise which was promised to.’”

Good Counsel from Ar-Rabik bin Khaitsam

Ar-Rabik bin Khaitsam, may Allah bestow mercy upon him, said, “Prepare your ration and hasten to gather your needed provisions, and constantly remind yourself.” He then said, “Indeed, most men fear Allah because of the sins committed by other men. However, from that, they feel at peace with the sins they committed, Glorious and Exalted is He!”

Once he felt sick of hemiplegia, and someone said to him, “why you did not seek medical treatment?” He replied, “Perhaps, I knew that medicine is the right thing but I remember the “ ‘Ad, Thamud, and the Companions of the Rass, and many a generation between them¹, they were also inflicted with all kinds of diseases and they also had many physicians, yet in the end, those who provide the treatment and those being treated all died.

An Advice from Malik bin Dinar

Malik bin Dinar, may Allah bestow mercy upon him, said, “None is pleased and at peace like the one who is delighted with the remembrance of Allah, the Glorious and Exalted is He.

He also said, “Indeed, the righteous, when the verses of the Quran is read to them, the hearts exult towards the Hereafter.”

¹ Surah 25 al-Furqan Verse 38 – Allah presented a lesson on patience.

He then said, “A man will not achieve the status of righteousness until he leaves his wife as though she is has become widower, then he goes on to live in a dog’s house.”

Once he said, “I noticed that the source of all sins results from the love of this life on earth, whoever, managed to put aside this desire, will be at ease and relax (in the afterlife).” He also said, “I saw in some books, verily that Allah, the Glorious Almighty, says, “Indeed, the humiliating thing that I could do to a learned when he feels the love of life on this earth is to remove the pleasure of remembrance to Me from his heart.” ” Then he said, “The heart will ruin if there exists not a bit of sadness in it, just like the house is lifeless when it is ruin.”

Good Advice from Sufyan Ats-Tsauri

Sufyan Ats-Tsauri, may Allah bestow mercy upon him, said, “ A bad deed is like a disease while the learned is like its medicine.”

Then he said, “A learned is the doctor of religion and dirham (money) is the disease of religion. Thus when the doctor attracts and pulls the disease (money) to himself then who will give medical treatment to the others?”

Once he said, “ None has the ability nor the strength to worship if he does not develop the true fear (of Allah the Exalted).” He also said, “Indeed, the search for knowledge is to develop the fear and, with it, be mindful of duties to Allah. That is why it is considered a virtue and excellent. If not for that, then it is just like any other action.”

Valuable Words of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal

Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal¹, may Allah bestow mercy upon him, said, “I find that solitariness is more conciliate for my heart”. He also said, “Good health has ten parts, all of it cause neglectfulness.” Once his son Abdullah

¹ Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal is from the Asy-Syaibani clan, one of the four Imam of Mazhab, born in Baghdad. In his youth, he developed a yearning for knowledge. He traveled in his pursue for knowledge to Kufah, Bashrah, Mecca, Medina, Syria and the surrounding areas. He was imprisoned and tortured in the dispute regarding false report in the creation of the Quran. He passed away in Baghdad in 241H.

said to him, when he was still a young child, “O my father! Give me a ‘piece’.” He replied, “Your father does not have a ‘piece’! And a day in which he does not own a ‘piece’ is better than a day in which he holds a piece.” A ‘piece’ is a minimal amount of silver money in his period.

Good Advice from Ibrahim bin Adham

Ibrahim bin Adham, may Allah, the Exalted, bestow mercy upon him, said, “Take Allah as a friend, and dissociate from man.” He also said, “Whoever knows what he is asking for (and receive it), then he spent freely becomes contemptible; whoever set free his sight, will regret for a long time; whoever has long term ambition will spoil his good deeds; whoever let go of his tongue will kill himself.”

He, may Allah bestow mercy upon him, also said, “A servant is not truthful to Allah when he loves fame.”

Meaningful Speeches of Dawud Ath-Tha’i

Once a man said to Dawud Ath-Tha’i, “Give me a bit of advice.” He answered, “Fast from this earthly life, and make breaking your fast the Afterlife, keep away from mankind as you keep away from the lion.”

While Sufyan Ats-Tsauri, may Allah bestow mercy upon him, frequently invokes, “ O my Lord! Save us! Save us!” And Dawud Ath-Tha’i would invoke, “O my Lord! Cleanse us! Cleanse us!” Then he said, “When a person who does not fall into sinning asked Allah to save him! While those who sin ask for Allah for cleansing!”

Good Counsel from Ibnul Mubarak

Once Ibnul Mubarak¹, may Allah bestow mercy upon him, was asked, “Who is a man?” He answered, “The Learned!” Then, “Who is a king?” And he answered, “The Pious Ascetic!” Then, “so who is the despicable lowly life?” So he replied, “He who uses his religion to eat!” He, may

¹ His full name was Abdullah bin Al-Mubarak bin Wadhih Al-Hanzhali. A knowledgeable sheikh of Islam, a hafiz, works in the cause of Allah and a trader. He passed away in 181 Hijrah whilst returning from the war against Rome and buried at Het, a well known small town near the river of Furat. He settled in Khurasan.

Allah bestow mercy upon him, said, “Self-conceit or snobbishness is when you see in yourself something which is not with others while proudness is when you look down on another man.”

Spiritual Opinion of Al-Fudhail Bin Iyadh

Al-Fudhail bin Iyadh, may Allah bestow mercy upon him, said, “We will not attain the peak of drawing oneself closer to Allah with just prayers and fasting but with generous and gracious self, the righteous spiritual heart that gives good advice to the people. He, may Allah bestow mercy upon him, also said, “A man cannot groom himself any better than with speaking the truth and seeking permissible [*halal*] provisions. He, may Allah bestow mercy upon him, then said, “Modesty is when you bow down to and accept the truth, and you follow and abide by it. You receive the truth from whoever from you listen to it.” He also said, “Surely Allah choose not to refuse provisions for those who are mindful of their duties except to provide him from (sources) he never could imagine”¹.

Good Advice from Muhammad bin Aslam Ath-Thusi

Abu Abdillah, servant to Muhammad bin Aslam Ath-Thusi², may Allah bestow mercy upon him, said, “I visited Muhammad bin Aslam four days before his death at Naisabur, and he said, “O Abu Abdillah! Come here, let me give you glad tidings with news of what Allah will cause to happen to your good brother, soon death will descend upon me, and Allah bestowed me with no dirham (money) that He will direct me to account. Allah knows my weakness for; indeed, I could not put up with being accountable. That is why he did not leave me with anything to be accountable for”. Then he said, “Lock the door and do not allow anyone to enter until I die. Now know that, indeed, I shall depart this world and I do not leave any inheritance except the clothes on my body, my mat and the container with which I perform the ritual ablution, (other than that),

¹ As mentioned in surah 65 Talaq Verse 3

² Muhammad bin Aslam Ath-Thusi was one of those learned who memorized Hadith of the Prophet s.a.w. He was well known to be excellent character amongst his people till Imam Adz-Dzhabi nicknamed him the ‘Sheikh of the West’. He passed away in 242Hijrah.

these are my books. Do not burden other people looking for supplies (or assistance).”

Then he took out a small bundle, inside there were thirty dirham and said, “This was for my son, it was a gift from his close friend, I do not know of anything more permissible than this as the Prophet, may Allah blessings and peace be upon him, said, “You and your wealth belong to your father!” and “There is nothing more pleasing to consume than what one earns, and one’s child is also considered an earning,” shroud me with it!”¹. If the cloth that cost ten dirhams is not enough to conceal my private body [*aurat*], then do not buy more with fifteen dirhams. Instead, I unroll my mat to cover my dead body and fill the gaps with these cloths. Donate this container of water for ablution to the poor so they can take ablution with it. He then passed away on the fourth day. I was astonished why he had said such in privacy between him and me only.

As his funeral [*jenazah*] was leaving, many ladies exclaimed from the rooftop, “O people, this is the true learned who leave this world with his inheritance on his funeral, and not like our other ‘learned’ who work as slaves to their stomach only, they sat and taught knowledge in two or three years they have they enough money to buy house or fields and continue to accumulate wealth for themselves.

Spirituality of Ma’ruf Al-Karkhi

Mar’ruf Al-Karkhi, may Allah bestow mercy upon him, said to a man, “Put your trust in Allah until you feel He is with you and as if He is your friend, someone you can express complaints! Also, you should constantly remind yourself that death is with you and that you will never be separated from it. Know that the solution for all adversity and trial that befall upon you is to keep it secret and conceal, and this is because people cannot take any action to benefit you or to harm you or to prohibit it from happening.”

¹ That is to use the money to buy cloth to shroud his body after death.

Ma'ruf also said, "The world is like a boiling pot, filled with wastewater only to throw it away." Then he said, "If Allah so wishes something good for a servant He open for him doors of good deeds and close doors of contentious." He also said, "A servant talks in matters not related to himself when Allah, the All-Mighty, forsake him."

Once a man, who is well known for 'cupping', came to cut Ma'ruf's moustache; obviously, Ma'ruf was glorying Allah, then the man said, "it is not possible to cut your moustache while you are glorying Allah!" So Ma'ruf said, "While you want to work, that does not mean I cannot work too!"

Valuable Speeches of Al-Harits Al-Muhasibi

Abu Abdillah Al-Harits bin Asad AlMuhasibi, may Allah, the Exalted, bestow mercy upon him, said, "We have misplaced three things which till now we cannot find; a conserved beauty feature, a good speech that is the creed (of Islam) and a good brotherhood in faithfulness.

He also said, "Whoever grace his inner self with closeness and sincere faithfulness (to Allah) then Allah will grace his physically outward self with the ability to strive against his inner desire while following the practices of the Prophet, just as the Exalted says,

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا.

And those who strive in Our (Cause), We will certainly guide them to Our Paths!¹

Al-Hariths also said, "If you do not hear Allah, the Magnificent's call, how then can you answer Allah, the Exalted's motive!"

Good Advice from Bisyr Al-Hariths

Bisyr Al-Hariths, may Allah bestow mercy upon him, said, "There will come a time upon mankind, whereby the wise man will not find anything pleasant to the eyes. Then there will come a time upon mankind whereby the nation is headed by heavy-handed, unwise and stubborn leaders who lead people of affable, intelligent, noble characters." He, may Allah

¹ Surah 29 Al-Ankabut Verse 69

bestow mercy upon him, also said, “You will not taste the sweetness of worship until you place an iron wall between you and the inner lustful and ardent desires.

Al-Hasan Al-Musuhi said, “One-day Biysr bin Al-Hariths met me while I was shivering from the cold. He looked at me and recited:

قَطْعُ اللَّيَالِي مَعَ الْأَيَّامِ فِي حَلَقٍ وَالتَّوْمُ تَحْتَ رُواقِ اهْمٍ وَالْقَلَقِ

Spend the night and day in patchy cloths

And sleep under the porch of gloom and disquiet

أُخْرَى وَأَجْدَرُ يَ مِنْ أَنْ يُقَالَ عَدَا إِنِّي التَّمَسْتُ الْغِنَى مِنْ كَفِّ مُمْتَلِقِ

More precisely I prefer to live as such than,

To appeal for wealth by placing out a recipient's hand

قَالُوا قَنَعْتَ بِذَا قُلْتَ الْقُنُوعُ رِضًا لَيْسَ الْغِنَى كَسْرَةَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْوَرَقِ

They said that's enough! I replied, “Contented and please.”

Being rich is not just possessing pieces of gold

رَضِيتُ بِاللَّهِ فِي عُسْرٍ وَفِي يُسْرٍ فَلَسْتُ أَسْلُكُ إِلَّا أَوْضَحَ الطَّرِيقِ

I am pleased with Allah! In difficulty or at ease.

Scale not the path except that it brings to light

Spirituality of As-Sariy As-Saqathi

As-Sariy As-Saqathi, may Allah bestow mercy upon him, said, “Whoever wants to save his faith, and be at ease with his heart and body, and to lift his distress and grief then he should dissociate himself from people because this is the era for retreat and seclusion.” He also said, “Those who do not know the value of the favours (and good grace of Allah), do not cherish it, thus will have it remove without they being aware.” He also said, “A little of the practices of the Prophet [*Sunnah*] is better than many actions of heresy or innovation [*Bi'daa*], that aside, how can a man reduce his deeds as required of one who is mindful of his duties to Allah!

Ibnu Abil Ward said, “One day I came to As-Sariy. He was crying and his kettle broken. I asked him, “Why are you crying like this?” He said, “My kettle broke.” I told him, “I will buy for you one to replace it.”

He said, “Where can you buy for me one like it, whereas, I know the money with which I used to buy the kettle, who made it, where he got the clay for it, what the maker eats until he completed the job!?”

Good Counsel from Zin-Zun Al-Mashri

Once, someone asked Zin-Zun Al-Mashri about love, and he answered, “You should love what Allah love, and detest what Allah so detest, you perform all the good deeds and reject whatever that would keep you busy away from Allah, you are not fearful in your deeds for Allah even when censured by others, be compassionate towards Muslims, be firm uncouth with the Infidels, follow the path of the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, in faith.” He, may Allah have mercy upon him, also said, “Allah, the Exalted says, “whoever is concerned with the obedient actions towards me, I shall bestow upon him My love, he shall be my representative, should have complete trust in Me and submit himself entirely to me, so that he can witness wisely My Honor and Greatness, such that if he were to ask for this world to be destroy, I shall destroy it.

He, may Allah have mercy upon him, also said, “There was a time when a learned man increased his knowledge develop a hatred for this life on earth and his heart forsake it while these days, as the learned increased his knowledge, his love for the life on earth increased and his heart sort for it. Then a man loves to spend his wealth I search for knowledge while now a man will use his knowledge to gain wealth. Then you can see the light in a seeker of knowledge increases in his inward and outward self, while now you can see most of the seeker of knowledge corruption inwardly and outwardly.”

Then he said, “Familiarity with Allah brings a bright light while familiarity with mankind leads to a never-ending grieved reality.”

Valuable Speeches of Sahel bin Abdullah

Sahel bin Abdullah At-Tustari, may Allah have mercy upon him, said, “Indeed, Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, said to Adam, may Allah’s blessing and peace be upon him, “O Adam! I am Allah, and there is no

other God but I, whoever hopes for other than My favours, or fear other than My justice have not recognised Me.” Sahel also said, “Disaster from Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, is of two kinds, a disaster of mercy and a catastrophe of sanction. The disaster of mercy brings light to its victim about his lowly self and his needs towards Allah, Glory be to Him, and abandoned the preparations and spins of his inner self and its choices. While the disaster of sanction brings light to its victim the choice of the inner self and its preparations and spins.

Sahel also said, “Enlist the sweetness of renunciation[zuhud] by curtailing long term ambition; remove the cause of greediness by true feeling of despair of it; alludes to kind-heartedness by attending gathering of remembrance of Allah; embellish yourself for Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, by telling the truth in all circumstances and situations; you should not procrastination (in these deeds)! For indeed, procrastination will drown the failures! You should not be negligence or inattentive!¹ For indeed, it will blacken your heart; And brings out the increase in blessings with lots of gratefulness, thus you will not be able to achieve any of it!

Sahel also said, “Anger is more severe upon the body that illness because if he gets angry when its elements enter the body, the pain is more than what would be introduced from the disease, and this was why the Prophet, may Allah blessings and peace be upon him, advised, “Do not get anger!” and he repeated it repeatedly. Sahel also said, “There will come a time upon man when all that is permissible will be removed from the rich, then wealth will be gathered from sources which are not permissible. Then Allah will vest some of them to control over others until their pleasures of livelihood is impeded, which raised the fear in the heart of being poor on this earth, and fear the enemy will glee at their misfortune. There will be no pleasures in their lives except for their servants and workers are enjoying it.

On the other hand, their boss and leaders are constantly finding himself facing trials, tragedy, wretchedness, feebleness, fear of being

¹ This refers to our duties and obligations as servants to Allah the All-Mighty.

oppressed. Then there will be no pleasures in living except for the hypocrite and insincere, who do not care from where he obtained his wealth or how he spent his provision and how he destroys his self! At that moment, you will find the status of the knowledgeable the same as the ignorant, their lives are the lives of the cursive, (not straight), while their death is like the death of the confused and delusion.”

Excellent Counselling of Aljunied bin Muhammad

Aljunied bin Muhammad, may Allah have mercy upon him, said, “Tragedy is like a lamp for those knowledgeable and recognised it, an awakening (towards Allah) for the seekers, a ruin for the unwary neglects.” Once Aljunied was asked about mercy and kindness, he answered, “You give to others what they want from you, do not burden them with what they cannot bear, and do not speak to them what they do not understand. He also said, “When a friendship has flourished, rules of manners are put aside.” He also said, “O Youth! Make haste (and work hard) before your age (and become weak), and work diligently now before you need something after being assigned (old age, and thus unable to strive for it), for indeed, I remembered the activities I used to do that were not useful for myself, therefore, considered wasteful today.

Mansur bin Ali said, “Then his (Aljunied) status and situations were such that people are awe by his various activities.”

Good Advice from Al-Hassan Al-Bishri

Al-Hassan Al-Bishri, may Allah have mercy upon him, said, “ Man in this world is divided into five categories: (i) the learned who inherited from the Prophets; (ii) the pious ascetic who showed the way; (iii) the fighter who are the swords of Allah; (iv) the trader who have the trust of Allah; and (v) the authority who looks after the people.

If the learned became greedy and busy collecting wealth, then who should the people emulate? And if the pious ascetic succumbs to his desires then who will show and lead the way? If the fighter became a two-faced hypocrite, surely the hypocrite does not take action then who will defeat the enemy? If the trader became a cheat, then who can the

people put their trust and approval? If those with authority became wolf then who will look after the sheep and take custody of them? By Allah, none ruin humankind other than those two face bootlicker learned, those pious ascetics who succumb, those hypocrite fighters, those traders who cheat and those oppressive leaders.

وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ.

And soon will the unjust assailants know what vicissitudes their affairs will take.¹

The pious Sheikh Abdul Aziz Ad-Durani, may Allah's mercy be upon him, once composed the following proses featuring the situation,

When a god-fearing learned passed away,
 Then it's a loss for Islam, difficult to replace him
 With the death of an ardent worshipper loved by Allah
 With it, gone are the secrets of His breath
 With the death of a just and great leader
 The arbitrator of truth is reduced and difficult to replace.
 With the death of the brave armoured knight
 How do witness victory with a loss for the country
 With the death of a generous donor of wealth
 There will be less share of richness and favours
 Enough for you to mourn for this five
 The death of others are lightened and mercy upon it

Remembering Qus bin Sai'dah

It was narrated that a delegation from Iyad came before the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him. He asked them about Qus bin Sai'dah. They answered that Qus passed away. So the prophet prayed, "May Allah's mercy be upon him. It was as if I could see him riding a red camel in the market place of Ukazh, and he said, "O you people! Gather together, listen and remember (what I have to say). Certainly, those who live will die, those who die, end their story, all that is due to

¹ Surah 26 Ash-'Shu'araa Verse 227.

come will arrive, after that, indeed, there is news from the sky, while there are warnings on earth, with the seas of undulating waves, and the stars that are embedded in, and the sky that are elevated, and the plains that are spread out. I truthfully swear by the name of Allah! Indeed, Allah has rendered a religion upon us, is He please with your current religious practice? Do you think that man will go and not return? Are they pleased with Him enough to established a place there? Or are they left alone thus slept! Only one harmonious way yet the deeds are varied!” Then he recited a few proses which I cannot remember.

Then Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him said, “I remember it, O, Messenger of Allah.” Then the Prophet said, “Let’s hear it!”

Abu Bakr then recited:

In the earlier numerous people who have gone
Throughout the centuries bear witness to us
Whenever I witnessed the source of death,
Which do not reveal its origin and timing
And I saw my people advancing towards it
The big and small overwhelmed by it
All who were gone will never return
And so those remaining will also be gone
I am certain indeed, and that it is not impossible
That I too will suffer the fate of the screaming people

Then the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said, “May Allah have mercy upon Qus!” Indeed, I hope that Allah will raise him as a single people (of special status).”



Final Seal

We put the final seal on this most beneficial advice with narrations that were used to seal the seven-volume of books of Prophetic Narrations [*hadith*]. They are the fundamental references of the religion and Islam, the source of Jurisprudence, rules and governance. With the auspicious and blessings of the narrations of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, optimistically we hope from Allah a good conclusion. The seven-volume of books are:

Books of *Al-Muwattha'* of Imam Malik¹ bin Anas, may Allah have mercy upon him;

Books of *Shahih Bukhari* by Imam Muhammad bin Ismail Al-Bukhari², may Allah have mercy upon him;

Books of *Shahih Muslim* by Imam Muslim³ bin Al-Hajjaj An-Naisaburi, may Allah have mercy upon him;

Books of *Sunan Abi Daud* by Sulaiman⁴ bin Al-Asy'ats As-Sajistani, may Allah have mercy upon him;

Books of *Sunan At-Termidzi* by Imam Abu Isa Muhammad bin Saurah At-Termidzi⁵, may Allah have mercy upon him;

¹ Imam Darul Hijrah, Malik bin Anas Al-Ashbahi was born in Medina and passed away there in 179H.

² He was the leader of Imams and was known as the Leader of the Believers in the knowledge of hadith narrations. He was borned in Bukhara in 194H and passed away on the eve of Idul Fithri in 256H

³ His books are considered as most true and correct after the Books of Shahih Bukhari. He received some narrations from Bukhari and also from the teachers of Bukhari. He was borned in Naisabur and moved to a few Islamic cities but passed away in Naisabur in 261H.

⁴ One of the Imam of the world who was good in memorizing, jurisprudence, a range of knowledge and pious. His books As-Sunan contains 500,000 hadith. He passed away in Bashrah in 275H.

⁵ A respectable Imam of Hadith and at one time was a student of Bukhari, who described and acknowledged his ability to memorized. He passed away in Termidz in 289H.

Books of *Sunan An-Nasa'i* by Imam Abu Abdur Rahman Ahmad bin Syu'aib An-Nasa'i¹, may Allah have mercy upon him;

Books of *Sunan Ibni Majah* by Imam Muhammad bin Yazid bin Majah², may Allah have mercy upon him;

All praises and thanks to Allah, I had in possession all the collections of these great books, except for *Sunan An-Nasa'i*, which in possession was just its Bigger Collection. That was by the grace and favour of Allah. Transcendent is He, we are unable to count the tribute to Him, His tributes and characteristic are as set by Him.

In the conclusion of the Books of *Al-Muwattha'*, from a narration by Muhammad bin Jubayr bin Mut'im from his father Jubayr bin Mut'im³, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said,

لِي خَمْسَةُ أَسْمَاءٍ: أَنَا مُحَمَّدٌ، وَأَنَا أَحْمَدُ، وَأَنَا الْمَاحِي الَّذِي يَمْحُو اللَّهُ بِيَ الْكُفْرَ، وَأَنَا الْحَاشِرُ الَّذِي يُحْشَرُ النَّاسُ عَلَى قَدَمِي، وَأَنَا الْعَاقِبُ.

“I have five names. I am Muhammad. I am Ahmad. I am *al-Mahi* (the effacer), by whom Allah effaces infidel [*kuffar*]. I am *al-Hashir* (the gatherer), before whom people are gathered. I am *al-Aqib* (the last).”

In the conclusion of the Books of *Shahih Bukhari*, from Abu Zur'ah that Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, said, that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said,

¹ He was also known as Al-Khurasani (i.e. from the town of Khurasan) and later Al-Bishri (i.e. from the Town of Bashrah), one of the leading Imam in the science of Hadith. Even Imam Adz-Dzhabi said that he better at memorizing the hadith than Imam Muslim. He passed away in 303H.

² Al-Qazwini, (i.e. from the town of Al-Qazwini), he was a learned in the science of hadith, and wrote many books on the Science of Hadith, Interpretation of the Quran [Tafsir] and History. He passed away in 273H.

³ He was known as Al-Madani, a leading learned in the science of hadith of the Quraissy. His father was a Quraissy and closely link with the leaders of the Qureisy and the Arabs tribes. Ibnu Sa'ad mentioned him in his second book of Ath-Thabaqaat, as one of the followers [*Tabien*] of Medina. He passed away during the reign of Khalifa f Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik.

كَلِمَتَانِ حَبِيبَتَانِ إِلَى الرَّحْمَنِ، خَفِيفَتَانِ عَلَى اللِّسَانِ، ثَقِيلَتَانِ فِي الْمِيزَانِ: سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ
وَبِحَمْدِهِ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ.

“There are two expressions which are very easy for the tongue to say, but they are cumbersome in the balance and are very dear to Allah the Beneficent, and they are, ‘Glory to Allah all praises and thanks to Him, ‘Glory to Allah the Great’!

In the conclusion of the Books of *Shahih Muslim* from Qais bin Ubadah¹ who said that he heard from Abu Dharr who took an oath that this verse:

هَذَانِ خَصْمَانِ اخْتَصَمُوا فِي رَبِّهِمْ

“These two adversaries who dispute about their Lord.”²

That it was revealed in connection with those who on the Day of Badr came out (of rows to fight against the non-believers and they were) Hamza, Ali, ‘Ubaida bin Harith (from the side of the Muslims), may Allah be pleased with all of them, and ‘Utba and Shaiba, both of them the sons of Rabi'a and Walid bin 'Utba (from the side of the non-believers of Mecca).

In the conclusion of the Books of *Sunan Abi Daud*, narrated by Wahab bin Munabbih from his brother, that Mu'awiyah, may Allah have mercy on him said that the Prophet, may Allah blessings be upon him and grant him peace, said,

إِشْفَعُوا تُؤَجَّرُوا، فَإِنِّي لأُرِيدُ الْأَمْرَ أُؤَخِّرُهُ كَيْمَا تَشْفَعُوا فَتُؤَجَّرُوا

“Make intercession, you will be rewarded; indeed, I purposely delay a matter so that you intercede and then you are rewarded.”

¹ Abu Abdullah, was among the trusted followers [*Tabi'en*]. He arrived in Medina in the reign of Khalifah Umar and lived in Basrah. He went to battle under the leadership of Ibnul Asy'ats and was killed by Al-Hajjaj bin Yusuf in 85H.

² Surah 22 Al-Hajj Verse 19.

In the conclusion of the collections of *At-Termidzi* and narrated by Al-Maqburi¹ from Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him who said that the Prophet, may Allah blessings and peace be upon him, said, قَدْ أَذْهَبَ اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ عِبِيَّةَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ وَفَحَرَهَا بِالْأَبَاءِ إِنَّمَا هُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ تَقِيٌّ وَفَاجِرٌ شَقِيٌّ، وَالنَّاسُ كُلُّهُمْ بَنُو آدَمَ وَآدَمُ خُلِقَ مِنْ تُرَابٍ.

“So Allah had removed from you the fanaticism of pre-Islamic paganism and its practice of proud ancestral lineage, now it is only between the piety believer or the unchaste evildoer since all men are sons of Adam and Adam is from earth.”

Also, a narration from Al-Mughirah² bin Abu Qurrah As-Sadusi, that he heard from Anas may Allah be pleased with him, who said, قَالَ رَجُلٌ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ! أَعَقَلْتُهَا وَأَتَوَكَّلُ أَوْ أُطْلِفْتُهَا وَأَوَكَّلُ؟ قَالَ إِعْقِلْهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ.

“A man asked, “O Messenger of Allah! Do I tied it (the camel) then put my trust in Allah [*tawakkal*] or do I let it go and leave it to Allah?” He (the Messenger) replied, “Tie it then put your trust to Allah!” ”

In the conclusion of the Books of *Sunan An-Nasa'i* narrated by Asy-Sya'bi³, from Umu Salamata, may Allah be pleased with her, that when the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, was leaving his house said,

¹ His name was Said bin Abu Said, also known as Al-Maqburi, attributed to a graveyard which surrounded his residence in Medina. There was a disagreement as to when he passed away, either 117H or 126H.

² Originally known as 'Abu Farwah' and that is a misrepresentation. He was a writer for Yazid bin Al-Muhalleb, whom he accompanied to Jurjan during the period of Khalifah Sulaiman bin AbdulMalik.

³ His name was Amir bin Syarahil Al-Himyari Al-Kufi. Ibnu Syubrimah, “I heard Asy-Sya'bi' said that I have not written black over white (meaning I did not wrote anything which I do not memorized), no man has ever relate to me (a hadith) which I did not eventually memorized, and no man has ever relate to me a news which I asked him to repeat (because I memorized it). There was a disagreement of when he passed away but he was borned six years after the period of Khalifah Umar.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ رَبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ أَنْ أَزِلَّ أَوْ أُزَلَ، أَوْ أَضِلَّ أَوْ أُضِلَّ، أَوْ أَظْلِمَ أَوْ أُظْلِمَ، أَوْ أَجْهَلَ أَوْ يُجْهَلَ عَلَيَّ.

“In the name of Allah, my Lord, I seek Your protection from overwhelming others or being overwhelm, or I misguided or be misguide, or I cause injustice or others cause injustice towards me, of being ignorant or cause stupidity upon me.”

In the conclusion of the Books of *Sunan Ibni Majah* narrated by Yazid bin Abi Maryam¹ from Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, who said that the Prophet, may Allah’s blessing and peace be upon him, said, مَنْ سَأَلَ الْجَنَّةَ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ قَالَتِ الْجَنَّةُ: اللَّهُمَّ ادْخُلْهُ الْجَنَّةَ، وَمَنْ اسْتَجَارَ مِنَ النَّارِ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ قَالَتِ النَّارُ: اللَّهُمَّ أَجِرْهُ مِنَ النَّارِ.

“Whoever asked for the heaven three times, then the Heaven said, “O Lord, put him in the heaven!” and whoever, seek refuge from hell three times, then the hell said, “O Lord save him from hell!” ”

Also narrated by Abu Saleh² from Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said,

مَا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا لَهُ مَنْزِلَانِ، مَنْزِلٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَمَنْزِلٌ فِي النَّارِ، فَإِذَا مَاتَ فَدَخَلَ النَّارَ وَرِثَ أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ مَنْزِلَهُ فَذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ.

“There is no one from among you without two houses, one in heaven and another in hell. If he died and entered hell then his home in the heaven those in the heaven were bequeathed his house; thus, that is just as Allah said, “These will be the heirs³.”

¹ The original recording wrongly recorded it as “Yazid bin Maryam”. He was the male servant of Sahel bin Al-Hanzhaliyah Al-Ansari, Imam of Jamek Mosque in Damascus. Abu Hatim said his daily provision were from donation of the people of Syria, He passed away in 44H whilst some said in 45H.

² He was Dzakwan Abu Saleh As-Samman Al-Madani, whom Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal trusted. He passed away in 101H.

³ Surah 23 Al-Muminun Verse 10

The above completes the conclusion of these respectable books of the prophetic traditions. Thus with it, we end this book. May Allah guides us to the truth and right. We ask for a good ending and an excellent place to return. For us, Allah sufficeth, and He is the best disposer of affairs¹. There is neither might nor power except with the permission of Allah, the Most-High and Magnificent. Thus all praises and thanks belong to Allah who had shown us this, and we will not be guided this way if not for the guidance of Allah. Thus the messengers of our Lord had sent the truth.

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ.
وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ. وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ.

Glory to thy Lord, the Lord of Honour and Power! (He is free) from what they ascribe (to Him)! And Peace on the Messengers! And Praise to Allah, the Lord and Cherisher of the Worlds.²

The author said: “We finished composing it with the help of Allah and His facilitation on Friday 27 or 28 Muharram 1114 years after the Hijrah of the Prophet, and to him, may Allah blessings be upon him and grant him peace, and upon his chaste, virtuous family, his respectable companions, and those who follow their path in doing good deed till the Day of Judgment.



¹ Surah 3 Ala Imran Verse 173

² Surah 37 As-Saffat Verses 180-182

Notes